Hafa Adai!

Charges vs sex offender allegedly found with minor is dismissed. PAGE 3
SBA disaster loan outreach center on Saipan to close down. PAGE 6

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Historic touchdown for Skymark

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Skymark Airlines Inc. made a historic touchdown on Saipan last Friday afternoon with a chartered B737-800 plane carrying 173 passengers, making it the first Japanese carrier to fly directly to Saipan since Japan Airlines withdrew from the CNMI in 2005.

See SKYMARK on Page 4

Skymark Airlines president and representative director Masahiko Ichie and Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, at left, flank first lady Diann Torres, partly hidden, as they help welcome passengers of the inaugural charter flight of Skymark at the tarmac of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport Friday afternoon.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Peter wins by landslide

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» Turnout at 52.47 percent

Marco Taisakan Peter of the Republican Party received 863 out of a grand total of 1,737 votes—or 49.68 percent of all votes cast—for a landslide victory in a four-way race for Precinct 3's vacant seat in the House of Representatives.

At 11:49pm Saturday, the Commonwealth Election Commission board of commissioners, led by chair Jesus I. Sablan, certified as true and accurate the results of the tabulation of ballots that they did manually at the Pedro P.

See PETER on Page 4

Marco Taisakan Peter and his family pose for a photo Sunday midnight, shortly after the Commonwealth Election Commission certified as accurate its tabulation of ballots for the special election. Peter of the Republican Party won by landslide votes in a four-way race for a seat in the House of the Representatives Precinct 3.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Man drowns at Sugar dock

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A 50-year-old man being described as a "local male" drowned outside the reef by the Sugar Dock over the weekend.

According to the Department of Public Safety, the man was declared dead on arrival at the Commonwealth Health Center. He was found face down in the open ocean outside the reefs near Sugar Dock in

See MAN on Page 4

Sablan

NMBAC: Wait for prevailing wage survey

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas Business Alliance Corp. is asking all employers to hold the submission of their petitions for renewal of all of their CNMI-only Transitional workers, or CW-1 workers, until the prevailing wage survey for the Commonwealth has been established.

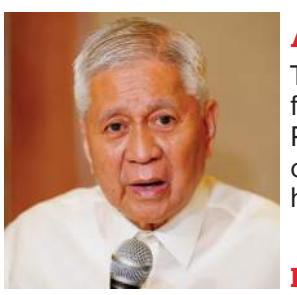
The Saipan Chamber of Commerce has sought the help of data companies to do the survey. Hive Analytics and DataTalks have

See NMBAC on Page 4

INSIDE

LOCAL
Triple J is sponsoring a prize for the Saipan Chamber of Commerce golf tournament.
PAGE 7

NATION
Americans wait for details on investigation about Russian interference in the U.S. election.
PAGE 15



ASIA
Two Philippine officials accuse Chinese President Xi Jinping of crimes against humanity.
PAGE 16

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GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

52 students inducted into MCS' two honor societies

MOUNT CARMEL SCHOOL
Newly inducted members of Mount Carmel School's Father Arnold Bendowski Chapter of the National Elementary Honor Society.

This past week, 52 students were inducted into Mount Carmel School's Immaculate Conception Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society, or the NJHS, and Father Arnold Bendowski Chapter of the National Elementary Honor Society, or the NEHS.

As part of the induction ceremony, current honor society students explained the respective values of the honor societies. For the NJHS, those values are scholarship, service, leadership, character, and citizenship. As for the NEHS, its values are scholarship, responsibility, leadership, and service. Students who have a 3.0 GPA fulfill the scholarship value of each society and are invited to apply for membership, for which they must demonstrate that they embody the other values of each respective society.

After the honor societies' were explained, inductees were identified by the ceremonious "tapping" ritual, in which current honor society members go around tapping inductees on their shoulders and inviting them to the main staging area to take their oaths, receive their membership insignia, and sign into the membership ledger.

School president Galvin Deleon Guerrero concluded the ceremony by explaining how Fr. Bendowski, the namesake for the NEHS, founded the school in 1952 and used his training as a mason to build the school over the years.

"Honor comes not from serving yourself but from serving others," Deleon Guerrero said. "And just as Father Arnold served, built, and loved our school, so should you."

NJHS inductees included Mercedes Cruz, Latisha Anne De Jesus, Princess Amanda Habal, Eunkyu (Joey) Hong, Irene Kim, Jamie Lee, Audrein Jennifer Mallari, Nicole Erin Mariano, Donnie James Militante, Leopoldo Naraja, Kamiya Nicole Obnimaga, Tricia Antonnette Palacios, Kaeli Pathil, Maili Peter, Kaitlyn Punzalan, Leunyce Regalado, Chelsy Anne Reyes, Lyssa Rae Steele, Tyana Kisha Tesiro, and Ari James Toskas.

NEHS inductees included Ainsley Ancheta, Wayne Ano, Asa Backe, Michael Calvo, Kesiil Camacho, Christine Castro, Carly Dela Cruz, Christopher Dela Cruz Guerrero, Patrick Guerrero, Seung Hee Jeon, Maya Jae Jung, Gabin Kim, Leah Lansangan, Justin Mallari, Naomi Matsumoto, Patricia Matsumoto, Hope McQuay, Maya McQuay, Sarah Melchor, Michael Mercado, Julio Mellen B. Monserrat, Nicole Pangilinan, Andrick Poon, Kaden Propst, Frank Reyes, Enzo DLG. Sasamoto, Yukiko S. Sasamoto, Sophia Tenorio, Jose Tenorio, Quince Tizon, Angel Tengco, and Sage R. Villagomez. ***(PR)***

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MOUNT CARMEL SCHOOL
Newly inducted members of Mount Carmel School's Immaculate Conception Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society.

COVENANT DAY ANNIVERSARY

Apatang: From simple to complex and diversified

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

As the CNMI once again celebrates another CNMI Covenant Day today, Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang looks back at the progress the Commonwealth has made since March 24, 1976.

Marking the 43rd year of starting from a simple island community to a "complex and diversified community of different nationalities," Apatang noted that it all started with a promise.

"On June 17, 1975, armed with the promise of a brighter future, an educated future, a sophisticated future, a future filled with hopes and dreams of better and responsible government, better education system, better health care, economic growth and prosperity, among other things, the people of the Northern Marianas approved the dream to become a contributing member of the greatest nation on earth, the United States of America," he said.

With that also came sacrifices such as giving up a portion of the "old ways of living, the feeling of total independence, their limited resources, and more," Apatang said.

"Although 43 years have passed…our political relationship with the U.S. is still in its nascent phase," he said. "We are still searching for the promises and hopes our fathers and mothers dreamed for us. No doubt, we are on the right path and have reached countless milestones."

Apatang called on the residents of Saipan to honor the vision of the Covenant's negotiators, the U.S. government, and former president Gerald R. Ford for signing the Covenant into U.S. Public Law 94-241 on March 24, 1976.

"Let us remember the many sacrifices and hard work that our past generations had unselfishly committed and performed to establish the commonwealth we have today, which we proudly call home," he said.

BankGuam Holding names executive team

HAGATNA, Guam— BankGuam Holding Co. announced last week several appointments to its executive team of the holding company and the bank.

Joaquin P.L.G. Cook was appointed as the president and chief executive officer and vice chair of the board of directors. With the bank since 2001, Cook completed the bank's management training and was then assigned to the bank's credit department serving as a loan officer for three years. In 2004, Cook then attended and graduated from the University of San Diego Business School, returning in 2006 to join the bank's commercial banking group. In 2009, Cook was named assistant vice president/Upper Tumon branch before being promoted to vice president/compliance department manager in 2011. He was named executive vice president/chief sales and service officer in 2015 and was named interim president and chief executive officer in 2018.

Cook

M. Leon Guerrero

W. Leon Guerrero

Cook serves on the boards of IP&E Holdings, LLC, ASC Trust, LLC and the Pacific Coast School of Banking, as well as the St. John's School board of trustees and Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Cook is a graduate of St. John's School and obtained his undergraduate degree from the University of California, San Diego. He earned his master's degree in Business Administration from the University of San Diego and is a graduate the Pacific Coast School of Banking.

Maria Eugenia Leon Guerrero was appointed as executive vice president/chief operating officer. She began her career with Bank of Guam in 2009 as a management trainee, and has held the position of commercial credit officer, Six Sigma Champion and strategic planning officer and director of Card Services before being appointed executive vice president/Retail and Card Services in 2016, overseeing the bank's branch network, e-banking and card services.

A graduate of the University of Washington (B.A., International Studies), the Foster School of Business at the University of Washington (Master of Business Administration) and the Pacific Coast Banking School, Leon Guerrero is also a certified Project Management Professional. She serves as the current chair for the Guam Foundation for Public Education, and is the vice chair for Teach Money, Inc. and treasurer of Sanctuary Inc. of Guam.

William D. Leon Guerrero is the new chairman of the board of the holding company and the Bank of Guam. With the bank since 1985, Leon Guerrero was previously executive vice president/chief operating officer. He is a graduate of Father Duenas Memorial School and obtained a bachelor of science degree from Santa Clara University. He is also a graduate of Pacific Coast Banking School. Leon Guerrero previously served on Guam's banking board and the University of Guam board of regents.

"Maria and I are grateful for the vote of confidence that the board has placed in us as young leader," said Cook. "The transition process has been thoughtful and productive, and we are excited and proud for the opportunity to continue the legacy of my grandfather, our founder. The new leadership team has the energy, knowledge and drive to reach new heights as we usher in a multitude of changes in our industry and our community." ***(PR)***

Charges vs sex offender allegedly found with minor is dismissed

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Superior Court on Friday dismissed without prejudice the case against a sex offender who was arrested during a compliance check last August for allegedly violating the terms of his probation when he was found with his adult girlfriend's minor daughter in his apartment in As Lito.

Dismissal without prejudice means the Office of the Attorney General may re-file the case against Frank Kaneshi.

Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho dismissed the charges and proceedings against the 31-year-old Kaneshi after the OAG and Kaneshi's lawyer agreed to drop the case.

Camacho vacated the motion hearing set for April 3.

Assistant attorney general Frances T. Demapana sked for the case's dismissal pending further investigation into the circumstances of the case.

Kaneshi, through counsel David George Banes, did not oppose the dismissal.

It was reported last month that Kaneshi's adult girlfriend is pregnant. He filed a motion questioning the constitutionality of a statute involving the CNMI Sex Offender Registry that prevents him from being around minor children, including his own.

Kaneshi was convicted in 2011 for sexual abuse of a minor in the second degree. He was sentenced to six years imprisonment. After serving the prison term, he was placed on probation.

While on probation, the CNMI Sex Offender Task Force and the U.S. Marshal arrested him during a compliance check last Aug. 13 for allegedly violating the terms of his probation when they allegedly found him with his adult girlfriend's 2-year-old daughter in his apartment.

Kaneshi, through counsel, filed last month a motion to dismiss the case.

Banes said the substance of Kaneshi's alleged violation is that, having been convicted in 2011 at age 23, of having sexual intercourse with a 15-year-old girl, he was now residing in the same household with his adult girlfriend and her 2-year-old daughter.

Banes said that since Kaneshi and his girlfriend are soon expecting a child of their own, he will again be in violation if they maintain a family household together.

However, Banes said, the statute is unconstitutional, under both the CNMI and the U.S. Constitutions as applicable in the CNMI under the Covenant.

The lawyer said the charge against Kaneshi should be dismissed as it violates his constitutional rights to due process, equal protection, and privacy.

He said the U.S. Constitution provides that no state shall deprive any person of liberty without due process of law.

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‘Look back to move forward’

The administration is reminding everyone of how the CNMI has evolved through the years after the Covenant was signed by local officials and their federal counterparts, which established the Commonwealth in political union with the United States.

“For 42 years, our Commonwealth has undergone numerous changes through its unique relationship in political union with the United States made possible by our Covenant,” said the administration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios in a statement.

“Today, we honor the framers of our Covenant for their courage and foresight in the creation of one of the most unique political documents in history, in which a group of 14 islands in the Western Pacific negotiated on equal terms with the United States for the hope of a better future for their children and their grandchildren.”

The administration said the people of the Commonwealth should always remember the work done by those officials that negotiated the Covenant.

“We remember pivotal negotiations over the course of 27 months from December 1972 to February 1975 by the Marianas Political Status Commission, made up of representatives of the Northern Mariana Islands, and a delegation representing the United States.

“We also look back at our most recent 902 consultations to discuss matters of great importance to our economic viability and our strategic role in the Pacific.”

They said the CNMI has continuously evolved with the changing times. “Whether it be for better or for worse, our young government has experienced numerous achievements and changes through the federal government’s actions and interventions, but we remain resilient and hopeful for years to come. Let’s continue to advocate for the best interests of the Marianas together.” ***(Jon Perez)***

MAN

From Page 1

Chalan Kanoa.

The victim was reportedly spearfishing early on Friday with a partner and drifted too far out and did not return.

Police received a call about a possible drowning outside the reef of Sugar Dock on Friday, at 11:20am.

At 11:34am, CNMI DPS Boating safety launched its rescue boat. At about 11:49am, DPS Boating Safety came upon an individual who was floating face down. They lifted him aboard the rescue vessel.

The victim was brought to the Sugar Dock Marina at 12:01pm, where medics transported the individual to CHC where doctors pronounced the victim dead upon arrival.

DPS Boating Safety later learned that the victim began fishing at about 9am with a partner who he had instructed to wait for him in the shallows as he went into deeper waters.

When the victim did not return, his fishing partner decided to wait on shore as the waters had gotten rough.

After waiting for some time, the victim’s fishing partner proceeded to ask bystanders to assist him in his search for the victim and to call 911.

CNMI DPS Boating Safety wants to remind individuals who practice spearfishing and free-diving to always dive with a partner and to be aware of the dangers of shallow water blackout.

Divers should practice safe fishing by monitoring water conditions before going out to sea and if something wrong is suspected, do not hesitate to call 911.

The local male is the second reported drowning of the year. The first was the drowning of Eiki Akiyama, a 22-year-old Japanese male and well-known YouTube star, who was pronounced dead on Jan. 1, 2019, at 2:55pm after drowning off Bird Island.

SKYMARK

From Page 1

This new partnership between Skymark and the CNMI government comes with high hopes of increasing tourist arrivals from Japan and reviving the slumping Japanese market.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, as well as Skymark president and representative director Masahiko Ichie led the Marianas Visitors Authority, Commonwealth Ports Authority, and Skymark officials and staff in welcoming the passengers as they got off the plane at the tarmac of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

Miss Marianas 2018 Celine Cabrera and MVA staff greeted the visitors with warm “hafa adai” and handed them souvenir gifts and leis. Cultural dancers also entertained the visitors as they entered the airport.

In a press conference held later at the Skymark counter, Torres noted that the flight is Skymark’s first international venture and that the CNMI is fortunate to be chosen as its partner.

Skymark operates largely as a domestic airline in Japan. It currently has 150 domestic flights.

Torres said Skymark is taking a bold step in going international and could have gone anywhere around the world. “But they chose to come to Saipan,” said Torres, adding that the CNMI is fortunate to have Skymark president Ichie on the island.

“Thank you for your partnership. Your success is paramount to our success to bring back the Japanese market and diversify our tourist market,” the governor said.

With Skymark, Torres said, Saipan is the gateway of travelers from Japan and Asia to visit the U.S. mainland.

He said this will bring numerous business opportunities for the CNMI while families can also go on vacation in Japan.

Torres underscored the importance of making sure that the CNMI and Skymark support each other and have that commitment.

In a separate interview, Torres projects the entry of more Japanese investment into the islands. The timing is just right, he said, as the CNMI’s revenues are down by 20 percent.

Torres promised that his administration is committed to helping Skymark.

Separately, Palacios credited this partnership on the MVA and a lot of people who worked behind the scenes to make it happen.

“Skymark finally has touched down on Saipan. The challenge for us now is to sustain it, make sure that our guests are treated well,” Palacios said.

In his remarks, Ichie said their success will never happen without the CNMI’s support and advice and their company’s success is also the CNMI’s success.

In a brief statement read by a Skymark staff, Skymark executive officer Narutoshi Terada said that Friday’s charter flight is just the start, “symbolic of our goal in providing regular daily flights into Saipan.”

Terada assured that he will devote all his efforts to ensure the success of the Narita-Saipan daily routes, which will start this summer.

“I’ll assure that I will be here on that very first day when we launch our daily flight,” he said.

Skymark assistant manager John Furuya said they will most likely start regular daily flights during summer.

“We will be carrying 177 passengers every day,” Furuya said, citing that this will translate to over 50,000 passengers a year.

MVA board chair Marian Aldan-Pierce said the CNMI and Japan have historically enjoyed a good relationship.

Aldan-Pierce said the foundation of the tourism industry was built by the Japanese over 40 years ago.

She said when Japan Airlines pulled out in 2005, it was a devastating blow to the CNMI economy.

“We were grateful that Northwest Airlines, now known as Delta, stepped in and covered some of the slack that JAL left,” she said.

The MVA chair said the CNMI has been without a Japanese carrier since then.

When Delta pulled out last year, she said, the CNMI in essence lost the Japanese market.

“It is only fitting that the return of the Japan market is made via a Japanese carrier. We sincerely thank Skymark for making that happen today,” Aldan-Pierce said.

She said they thank Skymark for choosing Saipan with which to embark on their first international route and look forward to a long and fruitful relationship.

MVA board member Jerry Tan said Japanese tourists have been coming to the CNMI for over 30 years and that Japan has been the CNMI’s leading market for decades. “There is no doubt that Japanese tourists love our islands,” said Tan, adding that there is no doubt in his mind that Skymark will be successful in its new venture to Saipan.

“And I’m sure that MVA and management of the board will fully support in promoting the Japan market. We are very excited,” he said.

Tan said it’s been 14 to 15 years since the CNMI has had a Japanese carrier fly direct to Saipan.

“We look forward to many more years of partnership with Skymark and redevelop the Japan market, which is badly missed by the people in the community,” he said.

Commonwealth Ports Authority board chair Kimberly King-Hinds assured that CPA supports and is committed to ensure Skymark’s success.

“Our door is open to full cooperation and working together to make this venture a success. Welcome to the CNMI,” she said.

Skymark, Japan’s third largest carrier, will also launch additional flights in April and May for Japanese Golden Week.

The CNMI government and Skymark earlier signed a co-promotional agreement that would re-open direct flights between Japan and Saipan.

Skymark is the first low-cost carrier in Japan. It is also the only carrier that offers domestic flights based at Haneda International Airport in Ota, Tokyo.

PETER

From Page 1

Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

It was the first special election in CNMI history in which only voters from one precinct were given another opportunity after a general election to cast their votes.

It was a festive GOP gathering near the old Japanese jail in Garapan, where Peter, his family, many government officials, and supporters waited for the election results.

In an interview, Peter said he is ready to work.

Peter said it’s been a long 90 days and that he is thankful to his family and his committee-to-elect for all the hard work they have done.

“I thank the community for entrusting, putting their faith on me, and thank GOP for allowing me to represent them in this journey that we are about to get on right now,” he said.

Asked about his priorities as a lawmaker, Peter said the CNMI is still working on recovery due to Super Typhoon Yutu’s devastation so he will focus on that.

He said local businesses need support right now and that he is looking forward to helping them on how to supplement their income and get them started.

Peter, a businessman, said people can’t just depend on the government or their own salary. They can find different ways to earn an extra income by going into business.

Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, who, along with Gov. Ralph DLG Torres visited the GOP gathering, said “in victory we are humbled.”

Palacios said Peter is “a very honorable individual and a good candidate.”

He said the Torres administration looks forward to working with Peter in the Legislature.

Former representative Donald Cabrera Barcinas of the Democratic Party came second with 447 votes. Independents David Castro Sablan and Mariano Deleon Guerrero Fajardo received total votes of 233 and 194, respectively.

Out of 3,356 registered voters, 1,761 cast their votes or 52.47 percent. Out of 1,761 votes cast, 1,737 were determined as “good votes.”

CEC chair Sablan said this was the first time in the CNMI that they did a special election for only one precinct.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

NMBAC

From Page 1

been tapped to conduct the survey in coordination with the U.S. and CNMI departments of Labor, Department of Commerce, and the Central Statistics Division. The Commerce Department could have done the survey, but it would still need to go through procurement that would further prolong the process.

NMBAC president Alex Sablan told *Saipan Tribune* that they have asked employers to get educated on the whole process and why they need to wait for the results of the PWS. However, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has yet to issue the new CW-1 regulations for fiscal year 2020, which starts on Oct. 1 this year.

“So, we don’t know what’s going to happen on the process. That’s one of the delays [USCIS regulations]. … So, we’re asking people to wait for the regulations first,” said Sablan.

He added that employers must wait until a CNMI prevailing wage is established because, without that, once a CW1 worker’s petition is submitted, Guam’s average salary would be the basis. “You choose the [Guam] mean wage, which is at this time line is a lot higher than the CNMI, based on our economy. We don’t have the same economy as Guam.”

The Northern Mariana Islands U.S. Workforce Act of 2018 states that “in the absence of an occupational wage survey approved by the [U.S] Secretary of Labor under clause (i), the prevailing wage for an occupation in the [CNMI] shall be the arithmetic mean of the wages of workers similarly employed in the territory of Guam, according to the wage component of the Occupational Employment Statistics Survey conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.”

Sablan said if employers submit their petitions for renewal, without a prevailing wage code for a specific occupation, then the Guam wage would be the basis. “Then whoever is adjudicating the application at the U.S. Labor for wage determination, may establish that that’s the new wage—even if we come up with a CNMI wage later on. …It could be a dollar higher, that’s the impact, that you can set a new bar for the Commonwealth.”

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

2019 Miss Marianas contestants ready to begin

Five young women are vying for the 2019 Miss Marianas crown this year, in an exciting competition themed to honor one of the islands' ancient cultural traditions, celestial navigation.

Junalyn Billedo, Riane Capalad, Merly Fernandez, Sharon Palacios, and Shannon Sasamoto attended and completed the requirements of the 2019 Miss Marianas Orientation last Friday afternoon at the Marianas Visitors Authority and are ready to begin their journey.

"It is always a joy to see young women from our community rise up and embark on a new journey encompassing beauty, intelligence, volunteerism, fitness, leadership, and overall, personal growth," said Stellar Marianas public relations director Monique Boyer Sablan. "The upcoming months leading up to the pageant will be filled with numerous opportunities for our contestants to shine as community volunteers and role models for our youth."

The 2019 Miss Marianas Contestants gathered at Gold's Gym Saipan Saturday morning to introduce themselves and talk about one important aspect of the competition—health and fitness—along with representatives of the health club.

Gold Gym Saipan's fresh smoothies were served as the young women talked about why they decided to join the prestigious competition for the honor to represent the Marianas locally and to the world.

Stellar Marianas, the islands' nonprofit pageant and talent group, is finalizing close to $25,000 value in prizes from generous sponsors and supporters for the pageant scheduled for June 15, 2019, at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.

The 2019 Miss Marianas contestants will also be working with 2018 Miss Marianas Celine Cabrera in completing the re-launch of NMI Girl Scouts Chapter.

For more information, visit www.facebook.com/stellarmarianas or follow Cabrera on Instagram, @missnorthernmarianas. ***(PR)***

Scheduled power interruptions

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) would like to inform the general public that there will be scheduled power interruptions on the following dates, times and locations:

■ **Monday, March 25, 2019 – 8am to 4pm**
- ❏ Outage type: Sectionalized feeder outage on the Kiya 1 and Kiya 2 double distribution circuit
- ❏ Village location: As Terlaje
- ❏ Power service area(s) affected: As Terlaje
- ❏ Water service area(s) affected: None
- ❏ Wastewater service area(s) affected: W-6
- ❏ Work to be performed: Replace five wooden poles with concrete poles

■ **Tuesday, March 26, 2019 – 8am to 4pm**
- ❏ Outage type: Sectionalized feeder outage on the Kiya 1 and Kiya 2 double distribution circuit
- ❏ Village location: As Terlaje
- ❏ Power service area(s) affected: As Terlaje and Fina Sisu
- ❏ Water service area(s) affected: None
- ❏ Wastewater service area(s) affected: W-6 and W-8
- ❏ Work to be performed: Replace five wooden poles with concrete poles

■ **Wednesday, March 27, 2019 – 8am to 4pm**
- ❏ Outage type: Sectionalized feeder outage on the Kiya 1 and Kiya 2 double distribution circuit
- ❏ Village location: As Terlaje, Lower Dandan, Airport Road
- ❏ Power service area(s) affected: Lower Dandan and Airport Road
- ❏ Water service area(s) affected: None
- ❏ Wastewater service area(s) affected: A-13 and A-14
- ❏ Work to be performed: Replace five wooden poles with concrete poles

■ **Thursday, March 28, 2019 – 8am to 1pm**
- ❏ Outage type: Sectionalized feeder outage on the Feeder 1 and Feeder 3 double distribution circuit
- ❏ Village location: Garapan Middle Road
- ❏ Power service area(s) affected: Upper Navy Hill
- ❏ Water service area(s) affected: China Town, Upper and Lower Navy Hill, As Falape and Chalan Galaide
- ❏ Wastewater service area(s) affected: S-8
- ❏ Work to be performed: Replace one wooden pole with a concrete pole

■ **Thursday, March 28, 2019 – 8am to 4pm**
- ❏ Outage type: Sectionalized feeder outage on the Kiya 4 distribution circuit
- ❏ Village location: Susupe
- ❏ Power service area(s) affected: Susupe and Chalan Kanoa
- ❏ Water service area(s) affected: None
- ❏ Wastewater service area(s) affected: A-5 and A-11
- ❏ Work to be performed: Replace five wooden poles with concrete poles

■ **Friday, March 29, 2019 – 8am to 4pm**
- ❏ Outage type: Sectionalized feeder outage on the Kiya 4 distribution circuit
- ❏ Village location: Susupe
- ❏ Power service area(s) affected: Susupe and Chalan Kanoa
- ❏ Water service area(s) affected: None
- ❏ Wastewater service area(s) affected: A-11
- ❏ Work to be performed: Replace seven wooden poles with concrete poles

■ **Saturday, March 30, 2019 – 8am to 4pm**
- ❏ Outage type: Sectionalized feeder outage on the Kiya 4 distribution circuit
- ❏ Village location: Susupe
- ❏ Power service area(s) affected: Oleai, Susupe, Chalan Kanoa, Chalan Piao, San Antonio Afetnas
- ❏ Water service area(s) affected: None
- ❏ Wastewater service area(s) affected: A-11
- ❏ Work to be performed: Replace seven wooden poles with concrete poles

The purpose of the scheduled power interruptions is to de-energize utility lines and allow power line workers from the company Primary Source Electric and CUC to safely replace 35 wooden poles with concrete ones.

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor its Facebook page for the latest updates (https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/). ***(PR)***

NEWS BRIEFS

CUC warns vs use of large appliances

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the public residing in the villages of Kagman, Koberville, Dandan, As Terlaje, and Fina Sisu to conserve their use of high-powered appliances that may result in low voltage performance due to the ongoing the scheduled power interruptions performed by line crews belonging to CUC and its contractor. Primary Source Electric, on the following dates:

■ Monday, March 25, 2019
■ Tuesday, March 26, 2019
■ Wednesday, March 27, 2019

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor its Facebook page for the latest updates (https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilities-Corporation/). ***(PR)***

Guam tax refunds mailed

HAGATNA, Guam—The Department of Revenue & Taxation and Department of Administration have mailed 167 tax refund checks totaling $468,468.00 for error-free returns filed on or before Oct. 2, 2018.

For inquiries, contact Dafne Shimizu, director, Department Of Revenue & Taxation at 671-635-1815/1816 or Edward Birn, Department of Administration at 671-475-1250. ***(PR)***

ATTENTION
Government Employees & Retirees!

The Island Smiles Dental Plan now available via your allotment

- **Low Cost:** $5.00 (Individual Plan) $6.00 (Two-Party Plan) or $7.00 (Family Plan) per allotment. Least expensive dental plan in the CNMI
- Members receive at LEAST 20%-50% discounts on all dental procedures. No exceptions!
- **Plan Provider:** Paradise Dental Spa. State-of-the art, full service General and Cosmetic dental clinic. Newest dental clinic and most experienced dentist in the CNMI. Really nice people!

AWARD-WINNING DENTIST
KIND AND GENTLE
DR. NELSON KRUM

Paradise Dental Spa

Hawaii Dental Service, TakeCare & Staywell Insurances also accepted. Medicaid patients welcome!

Call 234-4040
Middle Road, Gualo Rai, across Chong's

Stop by and pick up your enrollment packet or send an email request to paradisedentalsaipan@gmail.com

SBA disaster loan outreach center to close on Saipan

The U.S. Small Business Administration' Saipan Disaster Loan Outreach Center will have its last day on Saturday, March 30, 2019, at 6pm, and will be permanently closed after that.

The SBA center is located at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center on Beach Road, in Susupe. It is open Tuesdays to Fridays, 9am-6pm; Saturday, March 30, 9am-6pm; and closes 6pm Saturday, March 30.

SBA opened the center to provide personalized assistance to Rota, Saipan, Tinian, and the Northern Islands businesses and residents who were affected by the Typhoon Mangkhut that occurred Sept. 10-11, 2018, and Super Typhoon Yutu that occurred Oct. 24-26, 2018.

"Until the Saipan center closes, SBA customer service representatives will continue to be available to meet with businesses and residents to answer their questions about SBA's disaster loan program and close their approved disaster loans," said Tanya N. Garfield, director of the U.S. Small Business Administration's Disaster Field Operations Center-West.

Businesses and residents can still meet with SBA representatives until Saturday. No appointment is necessary.

Although the deadline to apply for a loan for property damage has passed, small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and most private nonprofit organizations of any size still have until July 1, 2019, to apply for an economic injury disaster loan to help meet working capital needs caused by Typhoon Mangkhut. Also, even though the deadline to apply for a loan for property damage has passed for Super Typhoon Yutu, small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and most private nonprofit organizations of any size still have until July 26, 2019, to apply for an economic injury disaster loan to help meet working capital needs caused by the disaster. Economic injury assistance is available regardless of whether the business suffered any property damage. Business owners may apply online using SBA's secure website at https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela.

Interest rates are 3.675 percent for businesses and 2.5 percent for private nonprofit organizations with terms up to 30 years. Loan amounts and terms are set by SBA and are based on each applicant's financial condition.

To receive additional disaster assistance information, visit SBA's website at www.sba.gov/disaster. Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for more information. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing may call (800) 877-8339. Completed applications should be mailed to U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155. ***(PR)***

HHS releases $487M more to expand opioid treatment; NMI to get $130.5K

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released last week an additional $487 million to supplement first-year funding through its State Opioid Response grant program. The awards to states and territories are part of HHS's Five-Point Opioid Strategy and the Trump administration's drive to combat the opioid crisis.

Together with the $933 million in second-year, continuation awards to be provided under this program later this year, the total amount of SOR grants to states and territories this year will total more than $1.4 billion.

HHS is awarding $130,500 to Northern Mariana Islands to support its ongoing work to connect residents to effective treatments.

This funding will expand access to treatment that works, especially to medication-assisted treatment with appropriate social supports.

"One year ago this week, President Trump launched his national opioid initiative, which called for expanding access to compassionate, evidence-based treatment, including MAT. This week's funding awards to states were possible because of legislation Congress passed and President Trump signed since then," said HHS Secretary Alex Azar. "Our strategy is beginning to produce results, thanks to so many Americans working on the ground, in their own communities, to turn the tide on this crisis."

The State Opioid Response grants administered by HHS's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration aim to address the opioid crisis by increasing access to MAT using the three Food and Drug Administration approved medications for the treatment of opioid use disorder, reducing unmet treatment need, and reducing opioid overdose-related deaths through the provision of prevention, treatment and recovery activities for opioid use disorder.

"Strategies such as employing psychosocial supports, community recovery services and MAT using medicines approved by the FDA constitute the gold standard of treatment for opioid use disorders," said Dr. Elinore F. McCance-Katz, assistant secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use.

Last summer, SAMHSA announced the first year of SOR funding. States and territories received funding based on a formula, with a 15 percent set-aside for the 10 states with the highest mortality rates related to drug overdose deaths.

SAMHSA also operates a 24/7, national Helpline that people can call to find treatment referral resources for mental health or substance use disorders: 800-662-HELP (4357). People can visit https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/ to locate those resources, as well.

To learn more about SAMHSA-supported resources, please visit SAMHSA›s Prescription Drug Misuse and Abuse page. ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH CASINO COMMISSION
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
P.O. Box 500237, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: 1 (670) 233-1857 • Fax: 1 (670) 233-1856
Email: info@cnmicasinocommission.com

AGENDA

Pursuant to the Open Government Act, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Commonwealth Casino Commission ("Commission"), hereby give notice that the Commission has scheduled a meeting on Thursday, March 28, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. at the Technology Room of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library (JKPL) in Susupe, Saipan.

The following Agenda will be discussed:

I. PRELIMINARIES:
- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Adoption of Agenda
- D. Adoption of Minutes: February 7, 2019 & February 27, 2019

II. REPORTS:
- A. Report by the Chairman
- B. Report by the Acting Executive Director

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

IV. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS:
- A. Casino Licensee (IPI) Updates:
  1. Construction Progress – Imperial Pacific Resort & Hotel.
  2. IPI Personnel – Status of RIF, Resident Employment Objectives, & CLA Annual Plan.
  3. Responsible Gaming Program.
  4. Compliance Committee.
  5. Other Miscellaneous Matters.
- B. Other Matters.

V. OLD BUSINESS:
- A. House Bill 21-11- "To clarify the powers of the Commonwealth Casino Commission"

VI. NEW BUSINESS:
- **A. Approval** for Regular Casino Vendor License – Non-Gaming (3-years):
  * **Macau Bidani Lighting Company Ltd.** Manufacturer of Architectural & Decorative Lighting. Provisional License Exp. Date: 04/29/19
- **B. Notification** of Provisional Casino Vendor License – Non-Gaming (1-year):
  * **Shanghai Byron International Trade Co., Ltd.** Distributor of Stainless-Steel Products, Mirrors, Glass & Glass Doors. Issued Date: 03/07/19; Expiration Date: 03/06/20
- **C.** Request to Withdraw Application for the Regular Casino Vendor License:
  1. **K.L. Carr Enterprises, Inc.** Letter of withdrawal from Richard Saludez, Project Manager, dated February 22, 2019. Provisional License will expire on 06/24/2019.
  2. **RCL-GUAM TECHNOLOGIES** Letter of withdrawal from Robert Lachica, General Manager, dated March 8, 2019. Provisional License expired on 03/14/2019.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:
- A. IPI Financial Matters
- B. Report by the CCC Audit Division
- C. Report by the Legal Counsel

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The Commission reserves the right to amend this agenda and take action on the amended agenda pursuant to 1 CMC §9910(b). Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Commission may vote to meet in Executive Session. In addition, the Commission may extend its official meeting for another day or more, if necessary.

Alvaro A. Santos
Acting Chairman

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-18-032 Rev 1.

Supply, Installation and Commissioning of a 1.5 MW Trailer Mounted Diesel Generating Set with Enclosure for the CUC Power Plant No. 3, Saipan, CNMI

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified firms for the Supply, Installation and Commissioning of a 1.5 Mega Watt Trailer Mounted Diesel Generating Set with Enclosure for the CUC Power Plant No. 3 Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The RFP Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 (non-refundable) for one RFP package set. The RFP package consisting of the specifications and plans for the project, will be provided in a CD or emailed to the registered email ID. Prospective Proposers must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division.

One (1) original and five (5) hard copies, along with an electronic copy of the proposal on a compact disk in PDF format or USB Drive, must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RFP-18-032 Rev.1 , Supply, Installation and Commissioning of a 1.5 MW Trailer Mounted Diesel Generating Set with Enclosure for the CUC Power Plant No. 3, Saipan, CNMI"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than April 2, 2019 at 10:00 AM (ChST).** Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

A *Proposal Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total proposal price must accompany the proposals. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or proposal bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful Proposer. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety.

Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Proposers are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Discussions may be conducted with responsible offerors who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Offerors shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors.

All Offeror are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Offeror are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proponent awarded a contract. Successful proponents will be required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page: https://marianaslabor.net/. The proponents shall be required to comply with all applicable CNMI and Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 26, 2019** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to yvonne.cabrera@cucgov.org, CUC-Power Generation Manager, Richard Cano via email address richard.cano@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, CUC Purchasing Assistant via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

ROBERT T. TORRES, ESQ
Attorney at Law
P.O. Box 503758 CK
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel.: 234-7859 • Fax: 234-5750

Attorney for Petitioner Armando Villafuerte

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF ANGELINA BORJA PEREDO aka ANGELINA P. RIOS, Deceased.	CIVIL ACTION NO. 16-0252 NOTICE OF HEARING Date: April 4, 2019 Time: 9:00 am Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho

TO ANNIE R. TOKYO AND MELINDA T. HOSSAIN, ALL HEIRS, AND INTERESTED PARTIES: NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Administratrix Daisy Ramirez has filed an Order Setting Status Conference in the above-titled matter. The hearing on the Status Conference is scheduled to be heard on the date and time set forth above at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing.

Dated this 6th day of February, 2019.

/s/ Clerk of Court / Deputy Clerk of Court

Triple J donates car to SCC golf tourney

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Triple J Saipan is sponsoring a hole-in-one prize for the annual Saipan Chamber of Commerce golf tournament next week.

Last Wednesday, Triple J Saipan donated a 2019 Hyundai Elantra that will be used as a hole-in-one prize in the chamber's annual fundraising golf tournament slated for March 30, 2019, at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

The prize may be won by scoring a hole-in-one on hole 17 of the golf course.

"On behalf of Triple J Saipan, Inc. and Triple J Motors, we're happy to support the Saipan Chamber of Commerce and their efforts to make a difference in our island community through partnerships and businesses alike," Triple J Saipan Inc. marketing manager Maria Valentina Haberman said in a statement.

The vehicle sports a 201 horsepower, 1.6L turbo engine, 6-speed manual transmission, 18" aluminum alloy wheels and an 8" touchscreen media display with backup camera, along with support for both Apple and Android devices.

Triple J Saipan is one of the many sponsors of the golf tournament.

"Proceeds of the event are instrumental in supporting all of the Chamber's current and future programs. Initiatives such as our scholarship program and professional development trainings as well as future initiatives around entrepreneurship and workforce development are integral to sustaining the private sector," an SCC statement noted.

From left, Triple J Saipan marketing manager Maria Valentina Haberman, Saipan Chamber of Commerce executive director Maxine Laszlo, SCC board member Alex Sablan, SCC board vice chair Joe Guerrero, and SCC staff pose with the 2019 Hyundai Elantra that will be a hole-in-one prize of the 2019 SCC golf tournament.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Showtime for the golf tournament starts at 6am; shotgun start at 7am. The registration fee is $130 per person, and chamber members would enjoy a discounted fee of $120 per member.

The tournament is followed by a banquet and raffle.

911 phones lines are OK

The CNMI Department of Public Safety has looked into the complaint regarding the 911 emergency line that it may be down. Upon further reviewing the complaint, there was no evidence found of a down 911 line.

The central dispatch office has been receiving calls about the 911 emergency line throughout Thursday, March 21, 2019.

The department later issued a statement saying DPS has tested the 911 system and has verified that all 911 calls are being routed to their respective dispatch centers.

DPS thanked the public for bringing up the issue to the DPS Central office, as this is an issue that requires close attention.

DPS reminds the public to refrain from calling emergency numbers just to test its functionality, and only call 911 in an emergency. ***(PR)***

Dental Solutions
is looking for one (1)
employee to work as
Insurance Claims Clerk

Renewal (Full-time)

- Must have a minimum of three (3) years working experience in dental claim processing.
- Must be familiar with CDT dental procedure code for billing
- Do not apply if you do not meet the minimum requirements.
- We are not willing to train individuals lacking the necessary skills for this position.

Drop Resume with photo to our office located in Microbeach Road, Saipan
No Phone Calls please.

Tips for Saving Money on Your taxes:
You should always try to claim every credit and deduction that you qualify for. To help ensure you don't miss anything, please visit at. . .

EdVenturesTAXPRO
2nd Flr. Island Commercial Center
Middle Road Gualo Rai, Saipan
across; FHB, Docomo and PizzaHut
Tel: (670) 235-0506
Cell: (670) 789-0506 / 286-0506
Email: ed.taxpro@yahoo.com
Look for: Ed Genobaten & Jasmin Rivas

Business Hours:
8:00am – 6:00pm Monday-Friday
9:00am – 5:00pm Every Saturday

Skymark's Inaugural Flight

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, and Skymark Airlines president Masahiko Ichie pose for a group photo with Skymark's pilots, Miss CNMI 2018 Celine Cabrera, Marianas Visitors Authority, and Commonwealth Ports Authority officials and staff at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport last Friday afternoon.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres hands the CNMI's commemorative gift to Skymark Airlines president and representative director Masahiko Ichie during a press conference.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, fifth from left, Skymark Airlines' president and representative director Masahiko Ichie, sixth from left, and other officials watch Marianas Visitors Authority board chair Marian Aldan-Pierce, rightmost, take her seat prior to the start of a press conference at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. Others in photo, from left, are Commonwealth Ports Authority executive director Chris Tenorio, MVA executive director Chris Concepcion, CPA board chair Kimberly King-Hinds, Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, and Skymark assistant general manager John Furuya.

KEVIN CALIBO

Skymark Airlines president and representative director Masahiko Ichie, center, is flanked by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and officials of Skymark, Marianas Visitors Authority, Commonwealth Ports Authority, and others during a press conference for Skymark's inaugural flight last Friday afternoon.

KEVIN CALIBO

Miss CNMI 2018 Celine Cabrera offers souvenirs to the passengers of Skymark Airlines' inaugural flight.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, first lady Diann Torres, and Skymark Airlines president and representative director Masahiko Ichie greet the passengers of Skymark's inaugural flight from Japan at the tarmac.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

From left, first lady Diann Torres, Marianas Visitors Authority director Jerry Tan, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, Rep. Janet U. Maratita (R-Saipan), and Wela Palacios, wife of Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, in last Friday's inaugural flight of Skymark Airlines.

JON PEREZ

Airline staff of Skymark Airlines have their picture taken with an escort at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport last Friday.

JON PEREZ

Rota delegation appeals to Finance to release medical referral funds

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Rota Legislative Delegation has sought the help of the Department of Finance for the release of the medical subsistence payments and interisland medical referral stipends of all patients living in the CNMI's southernmost island.

In a letter to acting Finance secretary David Atalig, Sen. Paul A. Manglona (Ind.-Rota), the delegation's chairman, said the funds are long overdue.

"The last medical subsistence [allowance] was paid out in December 2018 and the interisland medical referral stipend program was suspended last month. …It is now March and [Finance] has yet to release the January checks for our Rota patients," said Manglona in the letter.

He said he is not unaware of the projected reduction in the estimated general fund resources for the current fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2019, but pointed out that the money provided for the payment of the medical expenses for the terminally ill, and hemodialysis and medical referral patients are not part of the general fund. "These are funded by way of special appropriations from poker fees and gaming licenses."

"I am…requesting your office to process these payments expeditiously," Manglona said in the letter.

He said that more than $70,000 remains untouched in the appropriation's funds balance that's part of Rota Local Law 20-10 that. Finance, however, raised some technical concerns; the delegation tried to fix that with House Local Bill 21-7, D2, which was vetoed last week by then-acting governor Arnold I. Palacios.

H.L.B. 21-7, D2 would have appropriated $1,435,967 from the casino license fee that was allocated to Rota.

However, in his decision to veto the bill, Palacios said the money could not be appropriated again. "I have confirmed with the [DoF] that these funds have already been appropriated in previous legislations and therefore cannot be appropriated again."

"If it is the intent of the delegation to re-appropriate these funds for the purposes stated in this bill, the delegation must clarify that these funds are being re-appropriated and that the previous appropriations have been suspended," added Palacios.

Manglona, however, told *Saipan Tribune* that the supplemental funding should only be affected by the veto. "Even with the veto, this money is available and should be released to help with the essential medical needs and alleviate the daily struggles of our patients. The veto should only affect the supplemental funding."

The delegation plans to hold a session by Wednesday next week to address this matter.

**DOCOMO PACIFIC (SAIPAN), INC.
has openings for:**

DOCOMO PACIFIC (SAIPAN), INC. has openings for:

One (1) techZone Supervisor

Minimum Qualifications: High school diploma (may be foreign educational equivalent), two (2) years of experience in job offered or two (2) years of experience as an inventory technician for cellular phones and devices, and six (6) months of experience using Microsoft Excel and MindBill Resource Manager software.

Duties: Supervises techZone technicians in programming and activation of cellular phones and devices, headsets and accessories utilizing knowledge of their features and understanding of all applications/protocols required for cell phones, headsets and accessories. Supervises techZone technicians in performing repairs and upgrades of cellular phones and devices, headsets and accessories, including disassembling, repairing replacing parts, reassembling units and testing repaired cellular phones and devices, headsets and accessories, and upgrades of operating systems for cellular phones and devices operating systems. Performs programming, activation, repairs and upgrades for cellular phones and devices, headsets and accessories. Determines work schedules and assignments for techZone technicians. Ensures customer issues are resolved in a timely manner. Assists techZone Managers in overseeing all aspects of techZone operations. Conducts and/or coordinates training for new and existing techZone technicians. Tracks and monitors inventory and prepares inventory reports. Prepares daily, weekly and monthly service reports. Utilizes Microsoft Excel software, MindBill Resource Manager software and other tools in performing job duties.

One (1) CATV Headend Bench Technician

Minimum Qualifications: High school diploma (may be foreign equivalent), two (2) years of experience as a CATV Headend/Bench Technician or Bench Technician, and six (6) months of experience using Arris CHP MAX Headend Optics Platform Receiver hardware, Arris CHP MAX Headend Optics Platform Transmitter hardware, Cisco Prisma Optics Platform Receiver, Cisco Prisma Optics Platform Transmitter and Cisco Local Craft Interface software.

Duties: Performs regular maintenance, repair, testing alignment, alterations and adjustment on all Cable TV ("CATV') headend electronic equipment by using various telecommunication test equipment and tools. Optimizes nodes for Arris CHP Max Headend Optic Platform Transmitter/Receiver and Cisco system. Assembles, aligns, repairs and maintains satellite dishes and configures satellite receivers/decoders parameters, and installs updated software. Performs RF signal alignment on analog and digital CATV systems at the headend on a regular basis. Performs regular proof of performance and other headend testing, documentation and reporting in accordance with FCC rules. Monitors and analyzes network downstream and upstream carriers on a regular basis and performs ingress mitigation, when necessary. Performs all task related to the hybrid cable, fiber coaxial system's operation and maintenance. Repairs faulty equipment such as defective and damaged optical transmitter/receiver, AC and DC power supply, RF amplifiers, encoder, satellite decoder, modulator, demodulator and other associated equipment. Utilizes Arris CHP MAX Headend Optics Platform Receiver hardware, Arris CHP MAX Headend Optics Platform Transmitter hardware, Cisco Prisma Optics Platform Receiver, Cisco Prisma Optics Platform Transmitter and Cisco Local Craft Interface software in performing job duties.

One (1) Maintenance Technician

Minimum Qualifications: High school diploma (may be foreign educational equivalent), one (1) year of experience in job offered or Fiber Technician and one (1) year of experience using Cisco Nodes hardware, Scientific Atlanta amplifiers hardware or other broad band signal amplifier, line extender amplifier and CATV passive devices.

Duties: Responsible for all tasks related to the Hybrid Fiber Coaxial system's operation and maintenance. Performs preventive and demand maintenance tasks from the output of the headend, through the fiber optic distribution system to the node, through the trunk system to the distribution system, through the distribution tap to all terminal points with a drop system both upstream and downstream. Responds to area outages and problems. Responsible for all tasks associate with the Hybrid Fiber Coaxial optical, trunk, and distribution system. Troubleshoot and repair area outages and poor reception problems. Performs return path ingress mitigation. Performs upstream and downstream sweep alignment. Diagnoses HFC leakage and repair. Performs mainline CATV construction. Performs mainline active and passive devices installation. Installs standby power supply and tests/operation and maintenance of the Alpha XM3 power supplies. Locates underground HFC infrastructure using a cable locator or a ground penetrating radar and marks the depth and location for clearance purpose and underground trenching build. Performs preventive maintenance on CATV infrastructure to include coaxial cabling and fiber optic equipment. Ensures FCC compliance testing and compliance with OSHA, NEC, and company safety rules and procedures. Utilizes Cisco Nodes hardware, Scientific Atlanta amplifiers, line extender amplifiers hardware and CATV passive devices in performing job duties.

One (1) Field Technician

Minimum Qualifications: Associate's degree in Electronic or Electrical Engineering or Technology, or closely related field (may be foreign equivalent) and two (2) years of experience as a Field or Engineering Technician or closely related job for telecommunications or cable company.

Duties: Install new premises wiring, disconnect drop line, de-install "wreck-out" of drop line systems, and re-connect previous customers. Install advance services such as high speed internet, Digital, and VOIP phone service. Troubleshoot and repair all problems occurring within the CATV drop system from the output of the distribution tap to all terminal points within a drop system. Understand the proper operation of customer premises equipment such as analog boxes, High speed internet modems and be able to educate customers on its proper use. Monitor for and document CATV leakage. Create CLI leak reports and repairs leakage as required. Lead crew as assigned. Repair sources of CATV leakage from distribution tap to CPE in customers home. Perform audit of questionable connections to distribution taps. Perform sales of new services or upgrades of existing customers. Maintain accurate records of daily tasks. Work safely and follow all OSHA, NEC, and company safety rules and procedures.

One (1) Fiber Technician

Minimum Qualifications: High school diploma (may be foreign educational equivalent) and two (2) years of experience in job offered, Field Technician or Cable TV technician.

Duties: Assemble and install data and telephone communication lines, wiring, switching equipment, wiring frames, power apparatus, computer systems, networks, and related communication equipment. Set up service for customers, installing, connecting, testing and/or adjusting equipment. Run wires between components and to outside cable systems, connecting them to wires from telephone poles or underground cable accesses. Note differences in wire and cable colors so that work can be performed correctly. Test connections to ensure that power supplies are adequate and that communications links function. Inspect telecommunications equipment to identify problems. Climb poles and ladders, use truck-mounted booms, and enter areas such as manholes and cable vaults to install, maintain, or inspect equipment. Test repaired, newly installed, or updated equipment to ensure that it functions properly and conforms to specifications, using test equipment and observation. Gather information about work conditions or locations and collaborate with other workers to locate and correct malfunctions. Must be able to operate a Fusion Splicer, Stealth Sweep System, MPEG Analyzer, and Spectrum Analyzer. Must be able to test fiber strands with an OTDR and other fiber test equipment and must be able to perform troubleshooting of the Headend. Must possess knowledge of PathTrak Return Path Monitoring System. Observe all OSHA, NEC, and company safety rules and procedures. Perform other related duties, as assigned.

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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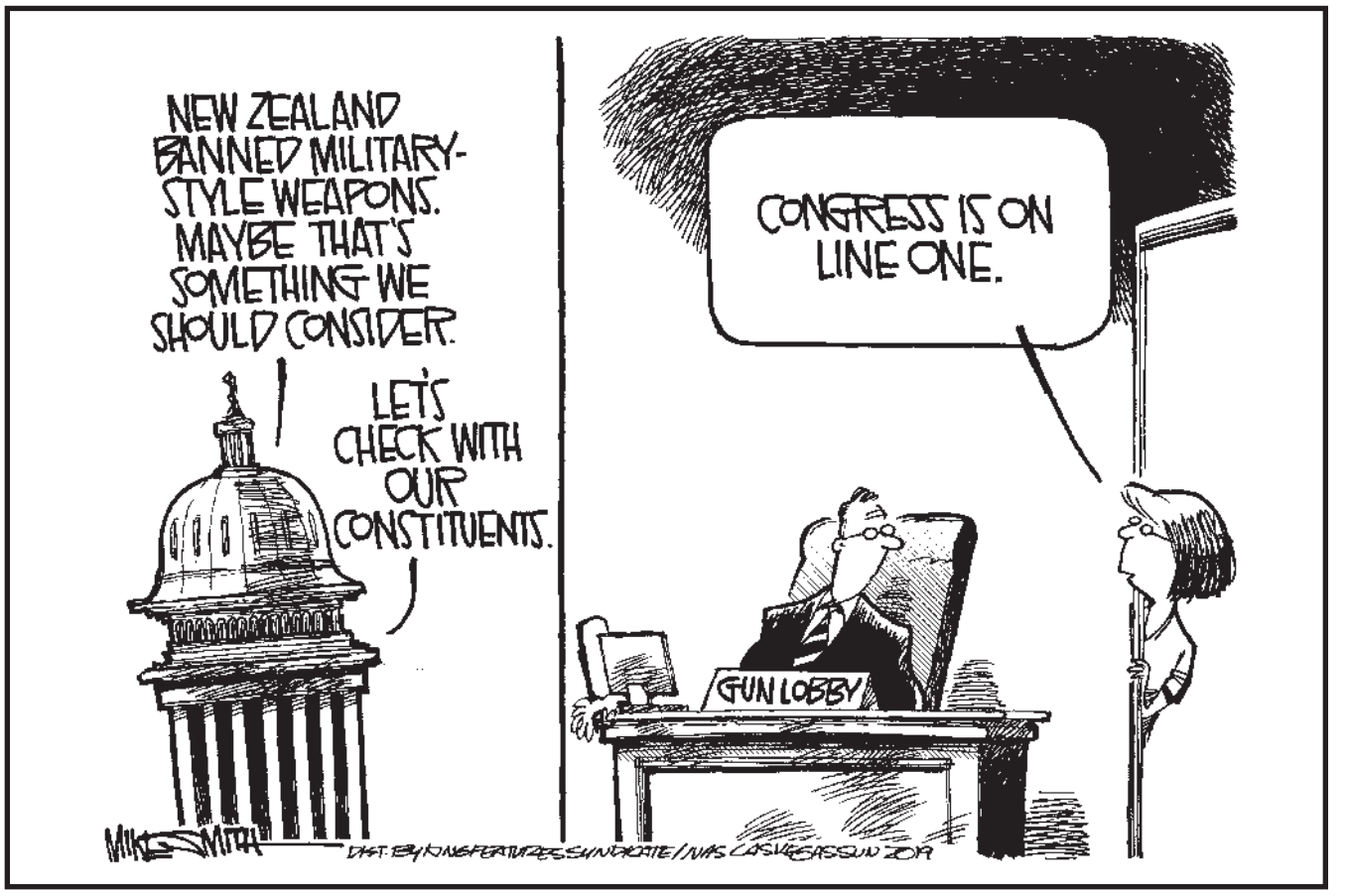
NEW ZEALAND BANNED MILITARY-STYLE WEAPONS. MAYBE THAT'S SOMETHING WE SHOULD CONSIDER.
LET'S CHECK WITH OUR CONSTITUENTS.
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EDITORIAL

Why America needs to see the Mueller report, right now

For nearly two years, the nation has been bitterly divided by special counsel Robert S. Mueller III's ongoing investigation into the 2016 presidential election and its aftermath. To President Donald Trump, the Mueller investigation has been the "single greatest witch hunt in American political history"—a "disgrace" and "scandal" that is nothing short of "corrupt," "illegal" and "rigged." To Trump's opponents, on the other hand, it has been merely justice at work, a necessary effort to determine whether an unfit and undeserving candidate (or those who reported to him) colluded with another country to seize control of the most powerful job in the world.

Now, finally, the work is done, the report is filed, and the U.S. Attorney General has in his hands the most comprehensive study yet of the connection between Russia, the election and the Trump campaign. But this must not be the end of the story.

It is vital that Congress and the public see the full report. The nation deserves to learn what Mueller has concluded not only about possible cooperation by the Trump campaign with Russia but also about possible obstruction of justice by the president. That's crucial whether or not Mueller has decided that Trump violated the law or committed actions that require further action by Congress. The report must not be buried.

See MUELLER on Next Page

America now inspires world for wrong reasons

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer. *Readers may write to her at: Philadelphia Inquirer, P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at trubin@phillynews.com.*

The mass murderer of 51 worshipers in New Zealand mosques last week issued a manifesto in which he asked himself this question: "Were/are you a supporter of Donald Trump?"

His answer: "As a symbol of renewed white identity and common purpose? Sure. As a policy maker and leader? Dear god no."

In other words, there was no linear connection between Trump and the New Zealand massacre, nor can he be directly blamed for the carnage. Yet Trump has become an important symbol for white nationalists and bigots in America, and for autocrats worldwide.

The New Zealand tragedy is only the latest illustration.

The United States, which inspired would-be democrats abroad for decades, is now led by a president who inspires anti-democratic movements. Look no further than his response to the New Zealand tragedy for the latest illustration of this dangerous trend. When asked if he viewed white nationalism as a rising global threat, Trump replied: "I don't really. I think it's a small group of people ... ."

The president studiously ignores statistics from respected U.S. groups that track extremism. According to the New York-based Anti-Defamation League (ADL), there was a 182 percent increase in white supremacist propaganda incidents in the last year, with 1,187 cases reported, compared with 421 in 2017. At least 91 white supremacist rallies were held in 2018, up from 76 the previous year.

The ADL also says that in the U.S. in 2018, "every single extremist killing—from Pittsburgh to Parkland—had a link to right-wing extremism." There were 50 such murders.

Add to that, the Southern Poverty Law Center, a diligent tracker of far-right extremists, says the U.S. had more hate groups last year than at any time in the last two decades, with "a 30 percent increase with Trump's campaign and presidency."

Get the trend?

Yet rather than denounce far-right bigotry after the New Zealand slaughter, Trump tweeted a storm of support for Judge Jeanine Pirro, who was briefly suspended by Fox News for anti-Muslim slurs. He retweeted kooky far-right Trumpsters who promote the crazy QAnon conspiracy theory detailing a secret plot by an alleged "deep state" against him.

Just before New Zealand, he told far-right Breitbart News that he had "the support of the police, the support of the military, the support of the Bikers for Trump," to play it tough against his opponents if need be, and "then it would be very bad, very bad."

His fact-free tweets about "stolen elections" hint at future incitement to violence should he lose in 2020. A further yellow light to violent extremists.

Of course, we have become inured to this behavior from a president who famously insisted some neo-Nazis at the torch-lit parade in Charlottesville, Va., were "fine people." No need to reprise his support of the "birther" lies about President Barack Obama, or his racist comments about immigrants.

But experts on extremism warn against downplaying the impact of the president's words in egging on extremists.

"It modifies what is considered permissible," says Harvard's Steven Levitsky, co-author of How Democracies Die. "Trump is defining deviancy down, and things thought unimaginable are suddenly imaginable. A congressman body-slams a reporter, and this is praised by the U.S. president. That shapes opinion."

Warns the ADL's deputy national director, Kenneth Jacobson: "For a long time, the view was that (right-wing extremists) were a few extreme kooks. It's not clear their numbers are growing substantially, but there is the growing sense that this is their moment and they may be able to act things out."

Rather than stem the tides of far-right extremism, Trump drives them higher like a bright new moon.

The president has also become a lodestar for anti-democratic leaders and movements in Europe, Latin America, and Asia. We've gotten used to his fulsome praise for Russia's Vladimir Putin, China's Xi Jinping, and North Korea's Kim Jong Un, accompanied by consistent nastiness to democratic allies.

Trump is clearly far more comfortable schmoozing with a clone like Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, an open admirer of his country's past military dictators, than with democrats like Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

The damage done by Trump's autocrat envy to America's image and influence cannot be overestimated. "We prided ourselves in the '50s and '60s as a model for democracy," says Levitsky. "If there are ugly folks in the White House, that can have the opposite effect."

The anti-democratic example Trump sets worldwide is glaring. Example: his constant denigration of responsible media as "fake news" and the "real enemy of the people." That term has been adopted by autocrats to persecute press critics, from Poland to the Philippines to Moscow (where many journalists have been murdered). Just this week, Trump said he was "very proud" to hear Bolsonaro use the term fake news.

Such language has consequences. It inspires strongmen who jail or murder journalists. Think Jamal Khashoggi.

So when the New Zealand killer cites the U.S. president as a symbol for white supremacists, pay attention. This is how low the presidency has sunk under Trump.

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Moo! Nunes is feeling cowed

By ROBIN ABCARIAN
Los Angeles Times

I get it, Devin Nunes.

Your feelings are hurt.

You don't like being called names, or being told that you belong in prison.

But when a person has a public profile—even a teensy one like mine—attacks will follow. Vilification comes with the territory. (As does praise, but whatever.)

Criticism, even unfair or vile criticism, is a small price to pay for the honor of being a congressman, or a newspaper columnist.

I've been the butt of countless jokes and insults. I have been called a "caterwauling, ululating, operatic diva." I have been invited to kill myself to make the world a better place, been accused of being an anti-Semite and a man-hating feminist.

I have been called "Satan's Little Whore."

Does it sting? Maybe for a minute.

But sticks and stones, baby. Suck it up. Somehow, as you grew up on your family's Tulare County dairy farm, you never managed to internalize that ego-preserving message. If you want to be a national political player, you have to brush off the insults, the name-calling and the jokes about your intelligence.

Instead, you are a thin-skinned public figure, willing to dish out nasty criticism about your enemies—real or perceived—but unable to take the slings that are inevitable in your line of work.

In October, you printed a 40-page pamphlet attacking your local newspaper, the Fresno Bee, which, until 2018, had endorsed you every time you ran for office. You purported to reveal its "dirty little secrets." You called out its reporters by name, accusing them of "glamorizing" your opponents by covering political demonstrations at your office. Taking a page from President Trump, you vilified the paper as "fake news."

And yet, Devin, you can't bear being made fun of by a fictional cow. On Twitter.

You're not just in a beef with a cow, you're snorting mad at the platform itself. You want Twitter and your tweeting tormentors to pay you at least $250 million, plus punitive damages of $350,000.

Devin, you do realize that when you filed your defamation suit, the sassy bovine had only 1,204 Twitter followers. As of Thursday evening, it had 607,000 followers, and the number is growing by the hour.

■■■

I love nothing more than curling up with a colorful lawsuit.

U.S. Rep. Devin Nunes is suing not just Twitter and whoever is behind @DevinCow, but a Republican political operative named Liz Mair, who frequently posts derogatory tweets about him. Also named in the suit: whoever is behind @DevinNunesMom, which was full of vulgar sexual insults and has since been suspended by Twitter. (Nunes has a mom, after all, and someone was impersonating her.) Mair has said she will not comment on the lawsuit, but is seeking donations for her legal fees.

The 40-page lawsuit is a compendium of the most insulting tweets. Some are funny; most are brutal; and many are so over the top you can't take them seriously.

@DevinCow often calls Nunes a "treasonous cowpoke" and has a propensity for terrible livestock puns: "He's udderly worthless." "Devin is whey over his head in crime." And so on.

Nunes claims this constitutes "an orchestrated defamation campaign of stunning breadth and scope, one that no human being should ever have to bear and suffer in their whole life." (Paging Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama: Please pick up the white hypocrisy phone for an apology from all the Republicans who screamed about putting you in jail and lied about your citizenship and were never disavowed by Nunes.)

The purpose of the "defamation campaign," the lawsuit claims, "was to cause immense pain, intimidate, interfere with and divert Nunes' attention from his investigation of corruption and Russian involvement in the 2016 Presidential Election."

Say what?

Democrats on the House Intelligence Committee regularly accused Nunes, who was chairman until this year, of obstructing the inquiry in order to protect the president.

He was widely mocked for that infamous midnight visit to the White House in which he slipped away from his own staff to share intelligence information with Trump's staff before showing it to his Republican or Democratic committee colleagues. For this, his fellow Republican, Sen. Lindsey Graham, compared him to the bumbling Inspector Clouseau.

Nunes also had to briefly step down from his chairmanship while the Congressional Ethics Office investigated whether he had made unauthorized disclosures of classified information.

And by the way, never mind that California's resounding blue wave, which helped Democrats take control of the House, cut into Nunes' support in November. He is blaming Twitter for causing him to beat his midterm opponent, Democrat Andrew Janz, by a smaller margin of victory than he had expected.

If Nunes really thinks that a bunch of Twitter trolls conspired to keep him from fulfilling his solemn obligation to the American people, he needs to put his hands in the air and step away from his Twitter feed.

Considering that Nunes was one of Trump's earliest and most faithful supporters, you have to smile when his lawsuit quotes Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart on the perils of false accusations: "Surely, if the 1950s taught us anything, they taught us that the poisonous atmosphere of the easy lie can infect and degrade a whole society."

Or that Nunes would invoke Shakespeare to portray himself as a victim: "He that filches from me my good name robs me of that which not enriches him, and makes me poor indeed."

(Paging the entire McCain clan, who know something about a good name being filched. And ditto Gold Star families.)

■■■

In 2017, it has been noted by many delighted critics, Nunes was a co-sponsor of a Republican bill called the "Discouraging Frivolous Lawsuits Act."

The bill, which has languished in a subcommittee, would have amended the Clean Water Act. It would have made it easier for water polluters to poison the water supply by preventing the EPA from taking certain actions, and harder for citizens to sue polluters. It would also have forced whoever lost to pay for both sides' legal costs.

That would make filing a citizen lawsuit against a corporation very risky, which would have the effect of discouraging not just frivolous lawsuits against polluters but all lawsuits against polluters. Which, I assume, was the whole point.

Is Nunes' defamation lawsuit frivolous? Seems like it. Legal experts say he is almost certainly going to lose.

Devin, I know it's not fun to be mocked, even by a parody account.

But with this silly lawsuit, all you've done is make yourself look foolish.

And created a celebrity out of a once-obscure, snarky cow.

A rare feat. Well done, Congressman.

MUELLER

From Page 10

Of course, we already know much of what Mueller's team believes happened and, assuming it is true, it tells a shocking story about the fragility of the American election system and the willingness of malign outside forces to subvert our democracy. Mueller's team has already asserted in court documents that there was an intricate, sophisticated Russian effort to meddle in the 2016 election through deception and disinformation—including the dissemination of fake news and the hacking of emails—to help Trump win the election. Though "collusion" has not been proved in any of the documents that have as yet become public, the indictments filed so far point to dozens of contacts between the Trump campaign and various Russians and their associates, many of whom had connections to the government.

For example, campaign adviser George Papadopoulos sought repeatedly to arrange a Trump-Putin meeting. Trump lawyer Michael Cohen struggled to broker a Trump Tower deal in Moscow while the campaign was underway. Campaign chairman Paul Manafort had repeated contacts during the campaign with a Russian associate with ties to that country's intelligence services. Donald Trump Jr. held a meeting at which he was promised damaging information on Hillary Clinton from Russian lawyer Natalia Veselnitskaya. And the list goes on.

But what does it add up to? What does it mean? Is it collusion or isn't it? Was justice obstructed after the fact? Was Trump in the loop or out of it? This is what Mueller still has to tell us. And even if he has concluded that no further crimes were committed than the ones he's already charged, the details need to be revealed so Congress and the country can figure out what needs to happen next.

For example, suppose that Mueller has concluded that Trump didn't violate laws against obstruction of justice by dismissing former FBI Director James B. Comey or by expressing the hope that Comey could go easy on former national security advisor Michael Flynn (an accusation by Comey that the White House has denied). Considering the same evidence that Mueller adduced, Congress might come to a different conclusion, or decide to use Mueller's report as a resource in its own investigations. Or voters might conclude, on the basis of that evidence, that they cannot vote for President Trump again in 2020.

This week, Trump insisted that he would like the report to be released. But the final decision rests with U.S. Attorney General William Barr, who was less than completely reassuring during his Senate confirmation hearings when he was asked whether he do so. Barr noted that the regulations governing Mueller's appointment provided for the special counsel to send the attorney general a confidential report.

But Barr also acknowledged that, under the same regulations, the attorney general makes a follow-up report to Congress that could be made public. Barr promised senators to "provide as much transparency as I can consistent with the law." He repeated that promise in the letter he sent to congressional leaders Friday reporting that Mueller had concluded his investigation. Barr said he would consult with Mueller and Deputy Atty. Gen. Rod Rosenstein about what other information from the report can be released to Congress and the public.

The longer the report remains under wraps, the more that Trump and his allies will be able to advance whatever narrative they please about it. Lately, the spin has been that Mueller somehow vindicated Trump because he has not brought charges against the president or alleged explicitly that the campaign worked with Russian agents. That's ridiculous.

And it's all the more reason Barr must err on the side of transparency, resisting any efforts by the White House to cloak some contents of Mueller's report by invoking national security. Because Mueller's investigation was at least in part a counterintelligence probe, it's possible that some information in his report could compromise sources and methods and should legitimately be withheld. But redactions should be minimal and based on recommendations from professionals in the intelligence community, not on political considerations.

For almost two years, the nation has waited for Mueller to finish his work, while worrying with good reason that Trump might move to dismiss the special counsel or abort or drastically rein in his investigation. While the prosecutors have worked quietly, Trump has repeatedly attacked the Russia investigation—hundreds of times, in speeches, on Twitter and elsewhere. No doubt some who are insisting that Mueller's conclusions be made public have already made up their minds about Trump's culpability. But you don't have to prejudge Mueller's conclusions to recognize the importance of sharing them with the public. Barr must move quickly to do that.

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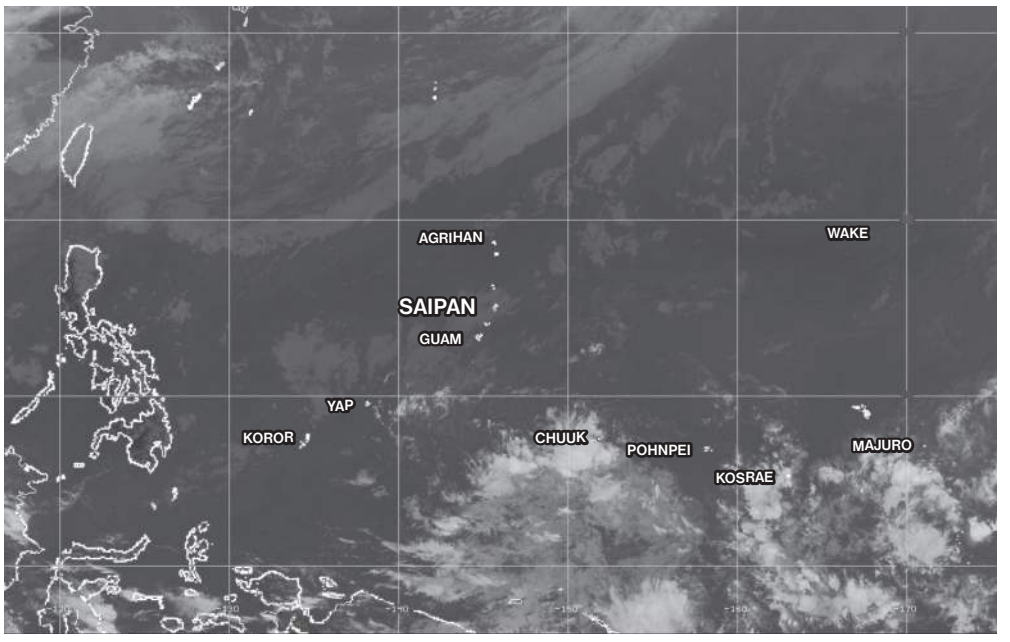
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.
88° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:49 AM, SUNDAY, MARCH 24, 2019
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

The combination of a diffuse shear line in the Marianas waters and a westward-moving trough southeast of Guam helped to bring in mostly cloudy skies and isolated showers. Radar shows showers now pulling back to the north of Guam. Radar cross-section imagery shows the depth of showers staying below 10 thousand feet, fairly typical in this dry season type pattern. The overnight balloon sounding shows that the atmosphere rapidly dries above that level.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	85° / 76°
Palau	Thunderstorms	84° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Kosrae	Showers	85° / 79°
Majuro	Showers	84° / 79°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	72° / 64°
Beijing	Sunny	66° / 37°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	75° / 70°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	81° / 69°
London	Partly Cloudy	55° / 36°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	75° / 55°
Manila	Mostly Sunny	93° / 77°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	66° / 54°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	79° / 68°
New York	Showers	55° / 33°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	50° / 37°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	57° / 36°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	63° / 45°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	66° / 48°
Salem	Showers	73° / 51°
San Francisco	Showers	57° / 49°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	57° / 36°
Tokyo	Showers	64° / 46°
Washington, DC	Showers	61° / 41°

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- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
4:49 AM	LOW TIDE	0.70
10:17 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.91
5:20 PM	LOW TIDE	0.01
11:49 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.75

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:18 AM	6:28 PM
Tuesday	6:17 AM	6:28 PM
Wednesday	6:16 AM	6:28 PM
Thursday	6:15 AM	6:28 PM
Friday	6:15 AM	6:28 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	9:31 AM	10:35 PM
Tuesday	-	10:18 AM	11:30 PM
Wednesday	-	11:07 AM	-
Thursday	12:23 AM	11:56 PM	-
Friday	1:14 AM	12:47 PM	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 22, 2019

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily
UA105	6:25pm	7:05pm	2, 4

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

SKY801	4:50pm	7:40pm	Daily up to Mar 30

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:15am	6:30am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3403	4:35am	8:25am	Daily
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	11:00am	1
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:55am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:15am	9:00pm	Daily via GUM
UA117/193 GUM-ROR	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via
UA105/193	6:25pm	11:50pm	2 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA117/159	9:15am	9:55pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA105/1596:25pm		11:00pm	2, 4 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA104	4:50pm	5:31pm	2, 4

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

SKY01K	10:00am	2:40pm	Daily up to Mar 30

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35pm	2:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:35pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:40pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/174	00:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA192/174 GUM-ROR	9:45pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via
PR110/UA174	10:05pm	8:11am+1	Daily via GUM
UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	00:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/174	10:50pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/174	11:45pm	8:11am+1	2, 4 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Special Election

The Commonwealth Election Commission board, led by board chair Jesus I. Sablan, certifies as true and accurate the tabulation of ballots for the special election after the manual counting at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe. FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Independent Mariano DLG Fajardo displays his campaign banner.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Voters walk to a designated polling place at Oleai Elementary School.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Carol Peter Hosono and a relative perform a dance number to make the camp of Marco Peter in Garapan lively.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Marco Taisakan Peter handily wins the special election.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Donald Cabrera Barcinas of the Democratic Party joins a group photo with the CNMI's first governor, Carlos S. Camacho, lawyer Stephen Woodruff, some family members and supporters.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Commissioners of the Commonwealth Election Commission manually tabulate the ballots.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and his brother Vincent Torres join Marco Taisakan Peter, Department of Public Safety Commissioner Robert Guerrero, lawyer Viola Alepuyo, and chief of staff Angel Demapan at the Republican Party's tent in Garapan.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Independent candidate David Castro Sablan, his family, and supporters during a roadside waving near Garapan Elementary School.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Business

Anti-Brexit marchers flood into London, demand new vote

LONDON (AP)—Anti-Brexit protesters flooded into central London by the hundreds of thousands on Saturday, demanding that Britain's Conservative-led government hold a new referendum on whether Britain should leave the European Union.

The "People's Vote March" snaked from Park Lane and other locations to converge on the U.K. Parliament, where the fate of Brexit will be decided in the coming weeks.

Marchers carried European Union flags and signs praising the longstanding ties between Britain and continental Europe. The protest drew people from across Britain who are determined to force Prime Minister Theresa May's government to alter its march toward Brexit.

May also is coming under rising pressure from her own Conservative Party to either step down or set a date for her resignation as her political support continues to wilt. The coming week is seen as crucial as political rivals jockey for position to succeed her.

Conservative Party legislator George Freeman tweeted that a new leader is needed.

"I'm afraid it's all over for the PM. She's done her best. But across the country you can see the anger. Everyone feels betrayed. Government's gridlocked. Trust in democracy collapsing. This can't go on. We need a new PM who can reach out & build some sort of coalition for a Plan B," he tweeted.

Liberal Democrat leader Vince Cable, invited to help lead the march in favor of a second referendum, called the crowd gathered in central London impressive and unified.

"There is a huge turnout of people here from all walks of life, of all ages and from all over the country," he tweeted. "We are a Remain country now with 60 percent wanting to stop the Brexit mess."

Police did not provide a crowd estimate. Independent legislator Chuka Umunna and others supporting a second Brexit referendum estimated the crowd at 1 million.

More than 4 million people endorsed an electronic petition this week in favor of revoking Article 50, the act that formally triggered the Brexit process.

The march comes as May, who opposes a second referendum on Britain's EU membership, is easing away from plans to hold a third vote on her troubled Brexit withdrawal plan, which has been strongly rejected twice by Parliament.

In a letter to lawmakers on Friday night, May said she might not seek passage of her Brexit withdrawal plan in Parliament next week. The embattled leader said she would only bring her EU divorce plan back to Parliament if there seems to be enough backing for it to pass.

"If it appears that there is not sufficient support to bring the deal back next week, or the House rejects it again, we can ask for another extension before 12 April, but that will involve holding European Parliament elections," she said.

May's changing stance reflects the plan's dismal chances in the House of Commons after two prior defeats.

She also says she would need the approval of House Speaker John Bercow to bring the plan back for a third time. Bercow has said a third vote would violate parliamentary rules against repeatedly voting on the same thing unless May's Brexit divorce plan is altered.

Almost three years after Britons voted to walk away from the EU, the bloc's leaders this week seized control of the Brexit timetable from May to avert a chaotic departure on March 29 that would be disruptive for the world's biggest trading bloc and deeply damaging for Britain.

AP

A demonstrator in an astronaut suit carries a sign during a Peoples Vote anti-Brexit march in London, Saturday, March 23, 2019.

Italy, China sign accord deepening economic ties

ROME (AP)—Italy signed a memorandum of understanding with China on Saturday supporting Beijing's "Belt and Road" initiative, which aims to weave a network of ports, bridges and power plants linking China with Africa, Europe and beyond.

With the move, Italy becomes the first member of the Group of Seven major economies, which includes the United States, to join the Belt and Road program, following Portugal's embrace of the initiative in December.

Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte and Chinese President Xi Jinping attended a ceremony in Rome where 29 separate protocols of the memorandum were signed by both governments in front of the flags of China, Italy and the European Union.

Luigi di Maio, the Italian minister of economic development, told reporters afterward that his country's goal is to increase exports to China in order to correct trade imbalances and boost Italian businesses and the country's troubled economy. He said the value of the individual deals signed on Saturday amounts to 2.5 billion euros ($2.8 billion), with the potential to grow to 20 billion euros ($22.6 billion)

"Our goal with these accords is to start to rebalance an imbalance for which there is a lot of 'Made in China' coming to Italy and too little 'Made in Italy' that goes to China," Di Maio said.

He said Italy now expects "a substantial and gradual increase of exports and we hope that in the next years we can balance out the trade imbalances."

Italy's move appears to also be driven by hopes that Chinese investment in Italy's ports might help revive the country's traditional role as a key link in trade between the East and West.

The signed accords are wide-ranging and include cooperation between banks, between a Chinese construction company and Italian ports, and the export of Italian fruit to China. The deals also foresee cooperation in the spheres of science and technology and between media outlets, as well as the return by Italy of hundreds of Chinese cultural treasures.

The signing ceremony took place at the Villa Madama, a Renaissance villa designed by Raphael, where Xi was greeted with full honors on the second day of his two-day visit to Italy. He then traveled to Sicily, where officials hope to attract more Chinese tourism.

Italy's involvement in the Belt and Road program gives China a crucial inroad into Western Europe and a symbolic boost in its economic tug-of-war with Washington, where President Donald Trump is challenging China over trade and other issues.

The EU, however, is worried about unfair competition from Chinese companies, which are controlled by the Chinese government and benefit from the state's financial backing. EU leaders in Brussels are preparing a strategy to counter the growing influence of China, which they describe as a "systemic rival."

Some Italian government officials were critical of the deals, worried that Italy might be ceding national sovereignty in key strategic areas to Beijing. In a sign of opposition, Matteo Salvini, the deputy prime minister and interior minister, stayed away from the official ceremonies with the Chinese delegation.

Di Maio stressed that Italy remains firmly rooted in its alliance with the United States, NATO and its European partners, but said Italy must also look out for its own economic interests.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

FAA to look at Boeing's fixes for 737 Max jets next week

NEW YORK (AP)—Boeing on Saturday confirmed the flight-control software fixes that it plans to make for its grounded 737 Max 8, the plane involved in two fatal accidents within five months. The company is tweaking the system designed to prevent an aerodynamic stall if sensors detect that the plane's nose is pointed too high. After the update, the system will rely on data from more than one sensor before it automatically pushes the plane's nose lower. The system won't repeatedly push the nose down, and it will reduce the magnitude of the change. Boeing said it will pay to train airline pilots. The Federal Aviation Administration expects Boeing's update next week. The Wall Street Journal reported Saturday that regulators tentatively approved Boeing's changes, subject to flight tests, citing government documents and people familiar with the details. FAA declined to comment.

Thousands in Germany protest planned EU internet reforms

BERLIN (AP)— Tens of thousands of people have marched in cities across Germany to protest planned European Union copyright reforms that they fear will lead to online censorship. The dpa news agency reports the biggest protest Saturday was in Munich, where 40,000 people marched under the motto "save your internet." Thousands of others took part in smaller demonstrations in the German cities of Cologne, Hamburg, Hannover, Berlin and other cities against the bill that is being voted on this week. The most controversial section would require companies such as YouTube and Facebook to take responsibility for copyrighted material that's uploaded to their platforms. Proponents say the new rules will help ensure authors, artists and journalists are paid.

Vermont's maple sugarhouses open to the public this weekend

JERICHO, Vt. (AP)—Maple syrup producers in Vermont—the country's top maple producing state—are opening their sugarhouses to the public this weekend. Organizers say this year's Maple Open House Weekend is bigger than ever with 138 sites participating, including restaurants and a brewery offering food and drink made with maple. Activities range from syrup tasting to sugar-on-snow parties and horse-drawn sleigh rides. Visitors also get to learn and see how syrup is produced. Officials say an estimated 40,000 visitors toured the state during the event last year. A map of open sugarhouses and maple-related businesses can be found online on the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association website.

Nation

US reacts to end of Mueller probe with relief, skepticism

AP

Attorney General William Barr carries his briefcase as he arrives at his home in McLean, Va., on Saturday evening, March 23, 2019.

PHILADELPHIA (AP)— With the long-awaited special counsel's investigation finished but its contents still shrouded in mystery, Americans waited for details, yawned with boredom or stayed fixed to their long-cemented positions on President Donald Trump, the man at the probe's center.

For all the expected splash of Robert Mueller's report, it arrived with more of a thud, thanks to the secrecy surrounding it. Few saw reason to think it would sway many opinions in a divided republic.

Helen Jones, a 72-year-old retired English professor in Salt Lake City, Utah, who is Republican but despises Trump, knows whatever comes out, her relatives who strongly back the president won't budge — just as detractors like her won't be convinced he isn't a crook. She sees no simple end in sight.

"I think it's just the beginning," said Jones, a political junkie who called the moment a historic one like Watergate. "I hope it's a turning point in the Trump presidency."

Across ideology, many expressed relief Saturday that the investigation was finally over.

"Now maybe we can move on to better things," said Bubba Metts, a 61-year-old conservative who is a financial adviser in Lexington, South Carolina. "Twenty million dollars spent — for nothing."

Dajah Harris, 21, a college senior at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, is a Democrat and no fan of Trump. But she saw the investigation as a distraction from more important things like homelessness, college debt and welfare programs. The country should never have elected someone, she said, whose background raises such questions.

"I don't feel that where the country is right now that this is something we should even be discussing," she said.

Mueller worked in virtual silence as a stream of charges have flowed forth against 37 people and companies. From the start, with his appointment on May 17, 2017, some have framed his work as a battle of good and evil of biblical proportions.

And on the 675th day, Mueller finished his work, and he rested. But nothing immediately changed for those who had watched with bated breath.

For Mark Itzen, a 64-year-old social worker from Levittown, Pennsylvania, it was a frustrating reality.

"The most disturbing thing for me is that we don't know the details," the Democrat said. "I thought we have the right to know right off the bat after all this anticipation."

Expectations remained high for some sort of explosive revelation, but what exactly it might be remained anyone's guess.

For liberals who welcomed the investigation with gleeful shouts of "It's Mueller Time!" and anxiously awaited justice that aligns with their view of Trump as Antichrist, it seemed the endless billows of smoke would surely produce evidence of fire. For conservatives who subscribed to the president's view of the probe as a witch hunt and dismissed it as the misguided tomfoolery of a bitter opposition whose search for retribution is as loopy as its policies, it seemed certain to bring exoneration to Trump and maybe even a roadmap for future victory by him and his party.

Jason Cox, a 51-year-old farmer in Campbellsville, Kentucky, who voted for Trump in 2016 and plans to again next year, saw it the way Trump framed it — as a witch hunt.

"It didn't turn out, it seems to me, the way Democrats wanted," he said. "I think Pelosi and Schumer are going to just keep beating and badgering and looking for something."

Stanley Twardy, legal adviser to Republicans for the Rule of Law, which worked to protect the Mueller investigation from political interference, said the report won't bring a quick end to anything.

"It's not like the report will be issued and everybody says, 'OK, we're done now,'" he said. "This is all part of a process. The process will work its way out. This is why our country has stood the test of time."

Shaela and Cindy Buchanan were tackling chores Saturday morning at the Lost Sock Laundromat in Wichita, Kansas, when the topic of Mueller was raised.

Man accused of fatally stabbing woman after freeway crash

PEORIA, Ariz. (AP)—A 25-year-old Arizona man who was driving a San Diego-area woman's car is accused of fatally stabbing her after the vehicle veered off a freeway and crashed in a Phoenix suburb, resulting in a chaotic scene involving passers-by who stopped to help.

Fernando Acosta of Phoenix got out of the car and accosted a witness with a knife before repeatedly stabbing Martha Thy of Spring Valley, California, along the Loop 101 freeway in Peoria on Friday, according to an Arizona Department of Public Safety probable-cause statement released Saturday.

Thy was stabbed while she was still inside the white Lexus sedan and then while on her knees on the ground outside it after she crawled out and closed a door behind her, the statement said

Acosta initially was on the driver's seat when he began stabbing Thy, who was seated in the passenger seat, the statement said. He then got out of the driver's side of the vehicle, going around to the passenger's side and resuming stabbing Thy before returning to the driver's side when she attempted to get away, the statement said.

Thy died at a hospital. The statement she was stabbed or cut at least 20 times.

The statement did not mention a possible motive. No additional information was available, the Department of Public Safety said Saturday.

Acosta remained jailed Saturday on suspicion of premeditated first-degree murder and aggravated assault. Court records don't list an attorney who could comment on his behalf regarding the allegations.

Several people stopped to help the woman, the Department of Public Safety said.

Gustavo Munoz told KNXV-TV that he was among the passers-by who stopped and jumped out of his car to help. "I ran towards the vehicle, and when I got to the other side of the ditch the man comes out with a knife. Hands full of blood. (His) face, body was filled with blood," Munz said.

A man with a gun fired shots at the ground to try to scare the attacker "to see if he would drop the knife and stop stabbing the lady that was in the vehicle," Munoz said.

One of the passers-by eventually tackled the suspect and knocked the knife from his hands, and others piled on and held the man down until police arrived, Munoz said.

Responding officers encountered a chaotic scene, Department of Public Safety spokesman Trooper Kameron Lee said. "People everywhere, some screaming, yelling going on, so you can only imagine what an officer's feeling when he arrives on scene and all he sees are people running around," Lee told azfamily.com .

It was tragic that the woman was killed, but authorities are grateful that none of passers-by were injured, Lee said.

Northbound lanes of the freeway were closed in the area of the incident for much of Friday as Department of Public Safety detectives conducted their investigation.

ACROSS THE NATION

Record number of people visit national parks in Alaska

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—A record number of people visited Alaska's national parks in 2018, the Anchorage Daily News reports. The National Parks Service says visits to its parks in Alaska topped 2.9 million, the highest number of visits recorded for the state, and up from about 2.7 million in 2014. The Daily News reports that the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park in Skagway had the most visits in the state last year, and it was the only national park site in Alaska to top 1 million visits. Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve, a remote volcano crater park site on the Alaska Peninsula, had the fewest, with 100 visits, the newspaper reports. The Daily News says a booming cruise industry bringing more passengers to the state in recent years is a major reason for more visits to the parks.

12 hurt, 50 cars involved in pileups on California highway

GORMAN, Calif. (AP)—Authorities say several crashes involving about 50 vehicles on Interstate 5 north of Los Angeles have sent 12 people to the hospital. The Grapevine section of the interstate was closed as emergency crews responded to the accidents Saturday afternoon. The California Highway Patrol's traffic incident website said the accidents occurred amid thick fog. Los Angeles County Fire Capt. Ron Haralson said a dozen people were transported to the hospital. One was in critical condition, four others sustained minor injuries and seven more had minor injuries. The injured included a 21-month-old child and a horse in trailer that was rear-ended. The Grapevine carries traffic over mountains between greater Los Angeles and the San Joaquin Valley. The wrecks caused traffic on northbound and southbound lanes to back up for miles.

Atlanta police set up hotline for 'child murders' case

ATLANTA (AP)—Atlanta's mayor and police chief are leading a push to re-examine evidence from a string of murders that terrorized the city's black community between 1979 and 1981. As a result, authorities are being inundated with calls. Now, officials have set up a central hotline for anyone with information about the "Atlanta Child Murders" cases. Atlanta police urged tipsters to call 404-546-2603 and, if no one answers, callers are encouraged to leave a message for follow-up. At least 25 African-American children and several adults were killed in the late 70s and early 80s. Atlanta native Wayne Williams was convicted in the deaths of two adults in 1981. He's been linked to the deaths of at least 22 of the children, but has never been tried. Williams maintains he never killed children.

Asia

Ex-PH officials accuse Xi of crimes against humanity

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Two former Philippine officials have taken the bold step of filing a complaint with the International Criminal Court accusing Chinese President Xi Jinping of crimes against humanity over his government's assertive actions in the disputed South China Sea, which they say deprived thousands of fishermen of their livelihood and destroyed the environment.

Former Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario and chief anti-graft prosecutor Conchita Carpio Morales said Thursday that they filed the complaint with the tribunal last week, before the current Philippine president's move to withdraw the country from the tribunal took effect last weekend.

They accused Xi and other Chinese officials of turning seven disputed reefs into islands in a massive engineering feat, causing extensive environmental damage, and of blocking large numbers of fishermen, including about 320,000 Filipinos, from their fishing grounds.

"This has seriously undermined the food and energy security of the coastal states in the South China Sea, including the Philippines," del Rosario and Carpio Morales said in a statement.

AP

Former Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario answers questions from the media during a news conference with former chief anti-graft prosecutor Conchita Carpio-Morales Friday, March 22, 2019, in suburban Makati city east of Manila, Philippines.

China's island building, which started in 2013 in an effort to construct air and naval bases in the disputed waters, reportedly destroyed large expanses of coral reefs and endangered fisheries. "It presents one of the most massive, near permanent and devastating destruction of the environment in humanity's history," they said.

"Though widely publicized, these atrociously inhumane actions of Chinese officials in the South China Sea and within Philippine territory remain unpunished, and it is only the ICC that can exact accountability on behalf of Filipinos and the international community," they said.

There was no immediate reaction from China.

Chinese officials have long claimed virtually the entire waterway, one of the world's busiest, with the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei also contesting ownership of parts of the strategic waters, where a large amount of world goods and the oil that fuels Asia's bustling economies transit.

When he was the Philippines' top diplomat, del Rosario questioned the legality of China's massive claims and other actions in a landmark international arbitration case against Beijing which the Philippines won but was ignored by China.

The arbitration tribunal declared in its July 2016 ruling that China's claims based on historical grounds were invalid and that Chinese forces have unlawfully prevented Filipino fishermen from disputed Scarborough Shoal. The tribunal also ruled that China breached its obligation under a 1982 U.N. treaty to protect the environment by undertaking island-building works and tolerating illegal fishing by Chinese nationals.

Despite the arbitration ruling and a 2002 accord with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to stop occupation and constructions in the disputed region, Beijing "behind the scenes" planned and later constructed the islands in the disputed territory, the complaint said. "This has placed billions of dollars' worth of natural resources, including fish, fossil fuels and shipping lanes, under Beijing's control," it said.

The complaint outlined China's increasingly assertive actions through the decades, starting in 1974, when it forcibly dislodged Vietnamese forces from the Paracels, to 1995, when it seized Philippine-claimed Mischief Reef, and 2013, when it started its island building.

Aside from Xi, it named as "perpetrators" Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Chinese Ambassador to Manila Zhao Jinhua.

The legal offensive against China contrasts with President Rodrigo Duterte's rapprochement with Beijing since he took office in mid-2016 while often criticizing the security policies of the United States, a treaty ally.

Trump says he's bucking Treasury, reversing NKorea sanctions

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)—President Donald Trump tweeted Friday that he has reversed his administration's decision to slap new sanctions on North Korea, with his press secretary explaining that the president "likes" leader Kim Jong Un and doesn't think they're necessary.

It's unclear, however, which sanctions the president was referencing in his tweet, which took Treasury officials by surprise.

"It was announced today by the U.S. Treasury that additional large scale Sanctions would be added to those already existing Sanctions on North Korea," Trump wrote from his private club in Palm Beach, Florida.

"I have today ordered the withdrawal of those additional Sanctions!"

The White House did not immediately respond to questions about which sanctions Trump was referring to, or what large-scale sanctions were poised to be added to existing ones already imposed on North Korea.

On Thursday, his administration did sanction two Chinese shipping companies suspected of helping North Korea evade sanctions—the first targeted actions taken against Pyongyang since Trump and Kim met in Hanoi, Vietnam, last month for negotiations about North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

In addition to Trump's talks with North Korea, the U.S. is knee-deep in delicate trade negotiations with China.

A person familiar with the action told The Associated Press that Trump's tweet was not a reversal of existing sanctions, but that the president was talking about not going forward with additional large-scale sanctions on North Korea at this time. The person was not authorized to discuss the president's comments and spoke on condition of anonymity.

It's unclear whether Trump's decision was related to North Korea's move on Friday to abruptly withdraw its staff from a liaison office with South Korea. The development is likely to put a damper on ties between the North and South and further complicate global diplomacy on North Korea's nuclear program. The withdrawal also is seen as a major setback for South Korean President Moon Jae-in, who has sought improved relations with North Korea alongside the nuclear negotiations between the North and the United States.

North Korea said it was withdrawing its staff under instructions from unspecified "higher-level authorities," according to a Unification Ministry statement. It didn't say whether the withdrawal would be temporary or permanent. South Korea called the North's decision regrettable and urged the North to return its staff to the liaison office soon.

It was the latest example of Trump's governance-by-tweet, which has often sent agency heads scrambling, trying to figure out what he meant and trying to implement policy proclamations that have not gone through traditional vetting processes. That includes when Trump announced, via tweet, that transgender people would no longer be allowed to serve in the military.

And it came hours after Trump made the official announcement that Islamic State-controlled territory in Syria had been reduced to zero from an airport tarmac, using a printed map he held upside-down, instead of a formal statement or ceremony.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Voting underway in Thailand's first election since 2014 coup

BANGKOK (AP)—Nearly five years after a coup, Thailand was voting Sunday in a long-delayed election that sets a military-backed party against the populist political force the generals overthrew. Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, the army chief who led the 2014 coup, is hoping to extend his hold on power after engineering a new political system that aims to stifle the influence of big political parties not aligned with the military. About 51 million Thais are eligible to vote. Leaders of political parties opposed to military rule have urged a high turnout as the only way to derail Prayuth's plans. The junta leader was among the first to vote in the Thai capital Bangkok, arriving in a Mercedes, after polling booths opened at 8 a.m. Speaking to reporters after casting his ballot, Prayuth said, "I hope everyone helps each other by going to vote today as it's everyone's right." The election is the latest chapter in a nearly two-decade struggle between conservative forces including the military and the political machine of Thaksin Shinawatra, a tycoon who upended tradition-bound Thailand's politics with a populist political revolution.

Thousands attend New Zealand vigil to honor 50 mosque dead

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand (AP)—Thousands of people have gathered in the New Zealand city of Christchurch to listen to prayers, songs and speeches at a vigil to remember the 50 people killed in a terrorist attack on two mosques. One of those watching from a wheelchair was 21-year-old Mustafa Boztas, who was shot in the leg and liver during the March 15 attack at the Al Noor mosque. Boztas says it was beautiful to see what the community had put together to show they care and that "we are all one." Officials estimate up to 40,000 people attended the event on a sunny Sunday evening at Hagley Park. It was held on a stage that had been set up for a concert by Canadian singer Bryan Adams that was cancelled after the attacks.

Indonesia's first subway opens in its gridlocked capital

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Indonesia's long-awaited first subway opened Sunday in the country's capital with the aim of relieving crippling traffic gridlock in Southeast Asia's biggest economy. Minutes after inaugurating the 16-kilometer (10-mile) transit line running south from Jakarta's downtown, President Joko Widodo presided over a groundbreaking ceremony to mark the beginning of the second phase: an 8-kilometer (5-mile) northward line planned for completion by 2024. The two projects are being built at a cost of $2.6 billion. "Today we will begin a new civilization by operating the first phase of mass rapid transit in Jakarta," Widodo told several thousand guests and residents at the inauguration. The line that opened Sunday includes seven elevated and six underground stations built by two consortiums of local and Japanese companies. Passengers can ride for free until the end of the month, after which operator PT MRT Jakarta has said tickets will cost the equivalent of between 70 cents and $1.

World

US-allied Syrian force declares victory over Islamic State

BAGHOUZ, Syria (AP)—U.S.-backed forces declared military victory over the Islamic State group in Syria on Saturday after liberating the last pocket of territory held by the militants, marking the end of a brutal self-styled caliphate the group carved out in large parts of Iraq and Syria in 2014.

The nearly five-year war that has devastated cities and towns across north Syria and Iraq ended in Baghouz, a minor border village where the cornered militants made their last stand, under a grueling siege for weeks.

On Saturday, the Syrian Democratic Forces raised their bright yellow banner from a shell-pocked house where the militants once flew their notorious black flag. Below it stretched a field shattered by the battle, pitted by trenches and bomb craters and littered with scorched tents, twisted wreckage of burned out vehicles, unspent explosives and few remaining corpses.

"Baghouz is free and the military victory against Daesh has been achieved," tweeted Mustafa Bali, a spokesman for the Kurdish-led SDF, referring to IS by its Arabic acronym.

The fall of Baghouz brings to a close a nearly 5-year global campaign against the Islamic State group that raged in two countries, spanned two U.S. presidencies and saw a U.S.-led coalition unleash more than 100,000 strikes. The campaign has left a trail of destruction in cities in Iraq and Syria, likely killed tens of thousands and drove hundreds of thousands from their homes.

The campaign put an end to the militants' proto-state, which at its height four years ago was the size of Britain and home to some 8 million people. But the extremist group still maintains a scattered presence and sleeper cells across Syria and Iraq. It's not known whether the group's leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, is still alive or where he might be hiding.

IS affiliates in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, Afghanistan and other countries continue to pose a threat, and the group's ideology has inspired so-called lone-wolf attacks that had little if any connection to its leadership.

The "caliphate's" end also marks a new phase in Syria's civil war, now in its ninth year. The country is carved up, with the Iranian- and Russian-backed government of President Bashar Assad controlling the west, center and south, the U.S.-backed Kurdish-led forces holding the north and east, and Turkish allies controlling a pocket in the north. The fear now is of new conflict among those players.

At a ceremony held later Saturday at the nearby al-Omar oil field base, a senior U.S. diplomat, William Roebuck, said the territorial defeat of the Islamic State group is a "critical milestone" that delivers a crushing and strategic blow to the extremist group. But he stressed it remains a significant threat.

"We still have much work to do to achieve an enduring defeat of IS," he said.

AP

A U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) fighter stands on a rooftop overlooking Baghouz, Syria, after the SDF declared the area free of Islamic State militants after months of fighting on Saturday, March 23, 2019.

Pope replaces Santiago bishop accused of sex abuse cover-up

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis on Saturday replaced Cardinal Ricardo Ezzati as archbishop of Santiago, Chile, after he was placed under criminal investigation in the country's spiraling church sex abuse and cover-up scandal.

Francis accepted Ezzati's resignation and named a temporary replacement to govern Chile's most important archdiocese: the Spanish-born Capuchin friar and current bishop of Copiapo, Chile, Monsignor Celestino Aos Braco.

In a statement asking for prayers for his new job, Aos acknowledged the difficulties ahead, noting the "light and darkness, success and shortcomings, wounds and sins" of the Santiago church. But Aos too faced accusations of cover-up after a former seminarian accused him of helping stall his case years ago.

The 77-year-old Ezzati had submitted his resignation to Francis two years ago when he reached the mandatory retirement age of 75. But Francis kept him on, and Ezzati became the flashpoint of abuse survivors' ire for mishandling several cases of abuse.

Just Friday, an appeals court in Chile allowed prosecutors to continue investigating Ezzati for an alleged cover-up, rejecting his motion to dismiss the case and remove himself from the probe, Chilean media reported.

Ezzati has denied covering up any cases but has acknowledged the pain of abuse victims and vowed to promote transparency.

At a press conference Saturday, he said he was leaving "with my head held high." He insisted that all complaints that were lodged with the archdiocesan office he created in 2011 "have been investigated or are being investigated."

Francis himself became embroiled in the Chilean scandal after initially discrediting victims during his 2018 trip to the country, sparking a crisis in confidence in the Chilean hierarchy and his own leadership.

After realizing his error and apologizing to the victims, Francis summoned all of Chile's 30-plus active bishops to the Vatican last May and strong-armed them into offering their resignations. With Ezzati's resignation Saturday, Francis has accepted eight of them.

Chilean abuse survivors have long accused Ezzati and his predecessor in Santiago, Cardinal Javier Errazuriz, of protecting predator priests and discrediting victims. In recent weeks, Ezzati has been embroiled in a new scandal after a man sued him for allegedly covering up his rape inside the cathedral.

The Chile abuse scandal first erupted in 2009, when victims publicly accused one of the country's most prominent preachers, the Rev. Fernando Karadima, of molesting them for years. Errazuriz initially shelved an investigation, only to have the Vatican eventually convict Karadima in a church tribunal.

After the scandal exploded again last year, Francis stiffened the penalty against Karadima and defrocked him.

Pollsters have cited the Karadima scandal as the tipping point in the Chilean church's progressive loss of credibility among ordinary Chileans.

Venezuelan power struggle creates diplomatic duel abroad

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP)—When Lorena Delgado approached the Venezuelan consulate in Colombia's capital on a recent afternoon hoping to extend the life of her expiring passport, she found the metal gates to the languishing building shuttered.

Days earlier, Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro had severed ties with the neighboring Andean nation where over a million of his compatriots have fled in recent years, recalling all his diplomats and leaving the consulate and embassy buildings closed.

The man challenging Maduro's claim to the presidency had appointed a new ambassador, but he was at a loss about how to help her. Despite the fact that Colombia recognizes Juan Guaido as Venezuela's legitimate president, the ambassador he sent does not have access to the consulate or the ability to issue passport extensions.

"You feel trapped," said Delgado, 32, who needs to travel abroad to apply for a work visa. "We're in limbo."

As Venezuela's power struggle stretches on, a parallel dispute for control of embassy buildings in the countries recognizing Guaido as Venezuela's true president has taken root. While new opposition-appointed diplomats are being recognized around the world, the United States is the only nation where they control a consulate building. In no country do Guaido's envoys have the ability to carry out basic tasks like issuing a passport, as Venezuela's civil registration agency remains under the control of Maduro.

The diplomatic duel has left the estimated 3.4 million Venezuelans who now live abroad stuck between two administrations. In most countries holdover consular employees continue to carry out tasks like registering births abroad while new, Guaido-appointed ambassadors remain outside embassy walls, symbols of their movement's lagging advance.

"At this moment, we don't have a solution from either side," said Paola Soto, 25, who is trying to reunite with her 5-year-old son in Chile.

The battle for diplomatic recognition is largely taking place behind closed doors, but it has occasionally spilled out into public.

In February, the Guaido-appointed ambassador to Costa Rica, Maria Faria, announced she had taken control of the embassy in San Jose, proudly posting on Twitter a photograph of herself standing in front of a Venezuelan flag inside the building. A shouting match erupted outside when the Maduro-appointed diplomats tried to get in.

Costa Rica's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, despite recognizing Faria as Venezuela's ambassador, issued a statement deploring her actions, saying she'd broken an established protocol allowing Maduro appointees 60 days to leave.

In March, a similarly confusing incident took place in Lima, Peru when workers were spotted at night removing chairs and even a stately bust of South American independence hero Simon Bolivar from the Venezuelan embassy. The furniture was put back inside after anti-government protesters decried them.

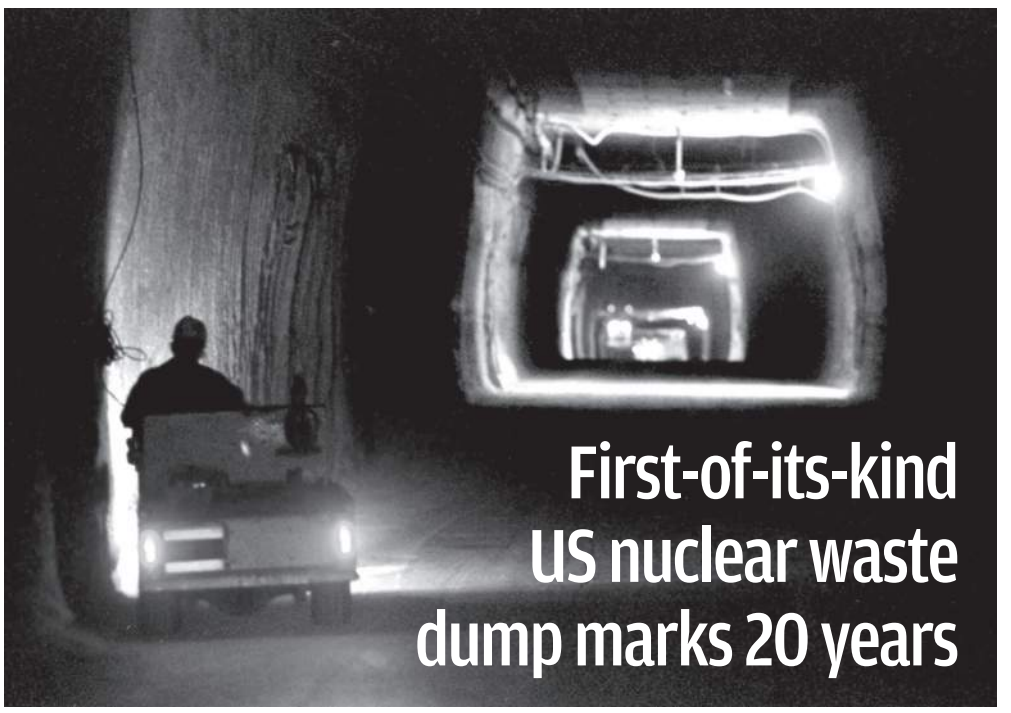
"You've robbed enough in Venezuela!" one angry woman shouted.

More recently, on Monday, Guaido's U.S. ambassador announced he was taking control of the New York consulate and two military-owned buildings in Washington where images of Maduro have now been replaced with portraits of Guaido.

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza accused the United States of violating articles of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations that require host countries to protect foreign embassy buildings even when ties are severed.

He warned that if the U.S. doesn't fulfill its international obligations, the Venezuelan government could pursue legal action and retaliate with reciprocal action - a not so veiled threat that they might occupy the recently vacated U.S. Embassy in Caracas. The U.S. withdrew all embassy personnel from Caracas due to safety concerns after Maduro severed ties with the U.S. over its support for Guaido.

Focus



AP

In this April 8, 1998, file photo, a worker drives a cart through a tunnel inside the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant No. 2, 150 feet below the surface near Carlsbad, N.M. Twenty years and more than 12,330 shipments later, tons of Cold War-era radioactive waste from decades of bomb-making and research have been stashed in the salt caverns that make up the underground facility and not without issues.

First-of-its-kind US nuclear waste dump marks 20 years

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)—In a remote stretch of New Mexico desert, the U.S. government put in motion an experiment aimed at proving to the world that radioactive waste could be safely disposed of deep underground, rendering it less of a threat to the environment.

Twenty years and more than 12,380 shipments later, tons of Cold War-era waste from decades of bomb-making and nuclear research across the U.S. have been stashed in the salt caverns that make up the underground facility . Each week, several shipments of special boxes and barrels packed with lab coats, rubber gloves, tools and debris contaminated with plutonium and other radioactive elements are trucked to the site.

But the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant has not been without issues.

A 2014 radiation leak forced an expensive, nearly three-year closure, delayed the federal government's cleanup program and prompted policy changes at national laboratories and defense-related sites across the U.S. More recently, the U.S. Department of Energy said it would investigate reports that workers may have been exposed last year to hazardous chemicals.

Still, supporters consider the repository a success, saying it provides a viable option for dealing with a multibillion-dollar mess that stretches from a decommissioned nuclear weapons production site in Washington state to one of the nation's top nuclear research labs, in Idaho, and locations as far east as South Carolina.

If it weren't for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, many containers of plutonium-contaminated waste would be outside, exposed to the weather and susceptible to natural disasters, said J.R. Stroble, head of business operations at the Department of Energy's Carlsbad Field Office, which oversees the contractor that operates the repository.

"The whole purpose of WIPP is to isolate this long-lived radioactive, hazardous waste from the accessible environment, from people and the things people need in order to live life on Earth," he told The Associated Press.

Stroble and others in the communities surrounding the repository are steadfast in their conviction that the facility is a success. They point to 22 sites around the nation that have been cleaned up as a result of having somewhere to put the waste—including Rocky Flats, a former nuclear weapons plant outside Denver that had a history of leaks, spills and other violations.

For critics, that success is checkered at best since the repository is far from fulfilling its mission.

"It's 80 percent through its lifetime, and it has disposed of less than 40 percent of the waste and has cost more than twice as much as it was supposed to," said Don Hancock with the watchdog group Southwest Research and Information Center. "How great of a success is that?"

Officials initially thought the facility would operate for about 25 years. Rather than wrapping up in the next few years, managers have bumped the timeline to 2050.

The repository was carved out of an ancient salt formation about a half-mile (0.8 kilometer) below the surface, with the idea that the shifting salt would eventually entomb the radioactive waste.

It was the National Academy of Sciences in the 1950s that first recommended disposing of atomic waste in deep geologic formations. Scientists began taking a hard look at the New Mexico site about two decades later.

The scientists had to convince themselves and then federal regulators that it was safe. One of their tasks was determining that the ancient seawater trapped between the salt crystals and bound up in thin bands of clay within the salt deposit would pose no problems thousands of years later.

"It was exciting to be working on what was then going to be the world's first deep-geologic repository for that class of waste," said Peter Swift, a senior scientist at Sandia National Laboratories. "Nothing that radioactive had been put that deep underground before. And that's still true 20 years later."

While the real test will be what happens generations from now, Swift is confident in the science behind the project.

But the wild card in whether the repository is ultimately deemed a success will be the human factor. After all, missteps by management were blamed for the 2014 radiation release.

With some areas permanently sealed off due to contamination, more mining will have to be done to expand capacity. The federal government also is spending more than a half-billion dollars to install a new ventilation system, sink more shafts and make other upgrades aimed at returning to "normal business."

Hancock and some former elected leaders involved in early discussions about the facility worry about the subterranean landfill becoming a dumping ground for high-level waste or commercial nuclear waste.

But it would take an act of Congress to expand the repository's mission, and getting consent from New Mexico's delegates would be a tall order since the federal government still has no long-term plan for dealing with such waste. Nevada's proposed Yucca Mountain project is mothballed, and no other permanent disposal proposals are on the table.

Toney Anaya, who served as New Mexico governor in the 1980s, remembers the heated debates about bringing more radioactive waste to the state. He said there were concerns about safety, but the promise of jobs was attractive. Some also argued New Mexico had a moral obligation given its legacy of uranium mining and its role in the development of the atomic bomb.

Another former governor, Bill Richardson, was on both sides of the tug of war—first as a young Democratic congressman who wanted to impose environmental standards and keep 18-wheelers loaded with waste from passing through the heart of Santa Fe. Then, he became U.S. energy secretary during the Clinton administration and pressured the state to clear the way for the repository to open.

US underground nuclear waste dump explained

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)—It wasn't long after the atomic bomb was dropped on Japan and World War II ended that the United States began to realize it had to do something with the waste that was being generated by defense-related nuclear research and bomb-making that would continue through the Cold War—and indefinitely.

Tainted with plutonium and other elements, the waste—gloves, clothing, tools and other materials—couldn't be left just anywhere, so it was decided that a repository would be dug deep into the desert in southeastern New Mexico.

WHAT IS THE WASTE ISOLATION PILOT PLANT?

WIPP is the United States' only permanent underground repository licensed to take what is known as transuranic waste, or waste generated by the nation's nuclear weapons program that's contaminated with radioactive elements heavier than uranium. There are a few other commercial facilities in the U.S. that accept low-level waste, but none involves hoisting the waste to such depths.

Carved out of an ancient salt formation about half a mile (0.8 kilometers) deep, the subterranean landfill is located outside of Carlsbad, New Mexico, a once sparsely populated area that is now home to a major oil and gas boom.

Following years of research, Congress initially mandated the construction of the repository as a research and development project. It's far beyond the experimental stage after 20 years of operation and more than 12,380 shipments.

Packaged in drums, special boxes and other containers, the waste is placed inside a series of rooms that have been excavated out of the salt layer. Some waste has to be handled remotely and is placed in holes bored into the walls. When the rooms are full, they are sealed off.

WHY NEW MEXICO?

In the 1950s, some of the world's top scientific minds began to weigh the options for what to do with this waste. They concluded deep geologic repositories would be the best way to deal with materials that would take a very long time to decay.

Initial efforts focused on an abandoned salt mine in central Kansas. Technical issues prompted a search for a more suitable site. The focus turned to New Mexico, where evaporation of the ancient Permian Sea eons ago had left behind a thick bed of salt.

Scientists say the benefit of salt is it's nearly impermeable. And since the layer in southeastern New Mexico is so old and expansive, they consider it more stable.

IS WIPP SAFE?

Government officials and nuclear experts say yes. Watchdog groups that monitor the federal government's nuclear weapons programs have other opinions and often cite safety lapses and instances over the decades in which radioactive materials have been mishandled.

Their best evidence is a 2014 radiation release that forced the closure of the repository for nearly three years and led to sweeping policy changes. The release was the result of waste being inappropriately packaged at Los Alamos National Laboratory—the birthplace of the atomic bomb.

Scientists, though, say disposing of the waste in the salt bed will keep it isolated from groundwater sources and the surface. The idea is the salt naturally creeps, healing its own fractures and filling in voids, so the waste will eventually be entombed.

Critics say the creeping of the salt isn't always a gentle process, as the repository has documented numerous instances in which chunks of the ceiling have fallen in areas that haven't been maintained.

WHERE DOES THE WASTE COME FROM?

More than a dozen national laboratories and government sites across the country package up waste and ship it to WIPP.

The first shipment—two boxes from Los Alamos—arrived with much fanfare in the pre-dawn hours of March 26, 1999. Residents lined the streets in Carlsbad and waved flags as the truck rolled through. At the repository, hundreds of employees waited at the main gate for a moment some thought would never come.

Idaho National Laboratory has sent more than 6,200 shipments to WIPP, followed by the Rocky Flats site outside of Denver. Waste also has come from the Hanford Site in Washington state and the Savannah River complex in South Carolina.

Officials say more than 14 million miles (22.5 million kilometers) have been traveled by the transport trucks, with only some minor fender-benders.

WHAT'S BEING DONE TO MODERNIZE WIPP?

Managers and workers at WIPP say they're still dealing with the effects of the 2014 release. Due to contamination of some of the underground disposal areas, workers have to wear protective suits and respirators. Adequate ventilation also is an issue.

The price tag for installing a new ventilation system, sinking new shafts and making other improvements totals more than $500 million.

Managers say the work is necessary and no different than someone sprucing up a 30-year-old home. Some of the earliest underground passages constructed at WIPP date back to 1983.

Officials are also looking at replacing some of the equipment used for mining the salt and moving the waste. Options include more efficient diesel engines or electric-powered vehicles.

Health & Wellness

This advertorial is sponsored by Tan Holdings HEALTH IS WEALTH Tan Siu Lin Foundation

PERSONAL TRAINER

After a brisk walk...

You do not need to be an athlete to get good exercise from walking, and after a walk, your muscles are warm and ready for gentle stretching.

Calf and hip stretch

Take a long step with left foot

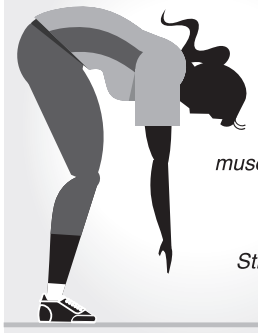
Bend left knee, keeping right heel on ground

Hold, then repeat on right side

Back and hamstring stretch

Stand with feet together, knees bent a little

Lean forward, with arms and head hanging loosely



Let body hang for a moment, relax; breathe out and let muscles stretch

No need to touch toes

Straighten up slowly

Shin and thigh stretch

Lift left foot behind body, grab with right hand

Pull gently and relax

Hold, then repeat on other side

Source: America's Walking by PBS
Graphic: Helen Lee McComas, Paul Trap

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5 simple ways to healthier eating, from Dallas nutrition pros

By LESLIE BARKER
THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

Like peanut butter and jelly, healthy eating goes hand in hand with movement. Here are five ways that Dallas-area nutrition pros suggest you incorporate the good stuff into your diet. They're easy and seem small, but can make huge differences.

Here we go:

1 SET A GOAL

Every week, write down one nutritious change you want to make, says Sara Asberry, a registered dietitian at the University of Texas at Dallas. It might be waking up 15 minutes earlier to eat a nutritious breakfast. Or adding one vegetable to every meal.

"Once they have mastered the first thing, it's easier to keep gradually adding to their routine," says Asberry, who works in the school's Student Wellness Center. "Eventually they have successfully developed long-lasting, healthy habits that they can keep forever."

2 DRINK UP

Megan Lyons of The Lyons Share, a Dallas health coaching service, suggests starting each day with a huge glass of water. Yes, she says, even before coffee.

"Hydrating right off the bat helps flush away toxins that have collected overnight and helps prevent dehydration, which can lead to overeating and cravings, during the day," she says.

3 REDESIGN YOUR PLATE

The key to better eating is moderation, Asberry says. "Healthy eating does not have to be void of all enjoyable foods. It's about balance. We tend to put so much emphasis on the foods themselves—'good foods' vs. 'bad foods.'" In reality, though, "it's more about how we are eating them in relation to one another."

What to do? Rearrange your plate, Asberry says. "Try portioning less starch and protein on your plate while adding significantly more vegetables. Ultimately aim to make half your plate vegetables."

MANDI WRIGHT/DETROIT FREE PRESS/TNS

Here is a Basic Hummus recipe you can make yourself.

4 CHECK INGREDIENT LISTS

Basically, "the shorter the better," Lyons says. If you recognize ingredients, that's good. If they look like "chemical soup, your body doesn't recognize it as food, even if the label says 'healthy.'"

5 SNACK WISELY

Meridan Zerner, consulting registered dietitian at the Cooper Aerobics Center, recommends 100-calorie mini-tubs of guacamole, hummus or nut butter. Be sure to scoop them with fruits and vegetables, not chips.

Also, measure out portions of nuts and trail mix, pop them into containers and keep them at your desk and in your car. Be sure to only eat one at a time, by the way; those calories can add up.

Lyons keeps small bags filled with vegetables at hand, "which I eat before any other snack," she says. "They give me a natural boost of energy, add to my fiber and nutrient intake, and keep me satiated so I don't overeat at dinner."

Losing weight: There's a good way and a bad way, and the bad way won't help

By MELISSA HEALY
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Here on the hopeful threshold of the new year, the last thing anyone wants to hear is that losing that excess weight we've been lugging around doesn't matter.

So when a new study comes along that seems to tell us just that, we could let it dash our resolutions and have another cookie. Or, we could actually read the research and find out that what it's telling us is that, when it comes to losing excess weight and getting healthy, procrastination kills.

So put down the cookie and fetch your sneakers.

New research published this week in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences suggests that, too often, many of us put off weight loss until our excess weight has already eroded our health — setting in motion heart disease, Type 2 diabetes or even cancer, all conditions linked to obesity. When our bodies are already under attack by disease, or hounded by its imminent prospect, we tend to lose weight, sometimes without even trying.

Maybe we even lose enough to exit the rolls of the obese—an achievement we should fear, not welcome, for it is often a harbinger of imminent death.

In fact, dropping that much weight intentionally is depressingly rare: Research has found that less than 5 percent of those who lose a substantial amount of weight maintain that weight loss for five years or more. Once obesity has been established, most who intentionally lose enough to enter the "normal healthy weight" category gain back their lost weight—often adding more—studies find.

The latest study looks at weight and risk of death. Its authors set out to replicate an influential 2013 finding that spurred a hypothesis widely known as the "obesity paradox." Writing in the Journal of the American Medical Association, epidemiologists from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that being overweight (with a body mass index from 25 to 29.9) seemed to confer some protection against premature death, and that the mildly obese (those with a BMI from 30 to 34.9) were at no higher risk of premature death that those of normal weight.

What the authors of the current study found instead is that, to accurately gauge risk of premature death in a large population of people, it's more revealing to ask people what their highest lifetime weight has been rather than to ask—as most researchers have done—what their weight is now.

In epidemiological surveys of Americans, people who were once obese but are no longer are generally counted as people of "normal healthy weight." But the current study's lead author, Boston University demographer Andrew Stokes, says such people are far more likely to have lost that weight unintentionally, due to illness, than to be among the few who have intentionally lost lots of weight and kept it off through sheer tenacity.

When Stokes and University of Pennsylvania's Samuel H. Preston looked at people's death rates as a function of their highest-ever weight (excluding pregnancy weight for women), they discovered that those who were once obese but are no longer were far more likely to die prematurely than were people who used to be obese and remained so.

Two factors suggest that most of those no-longer-obese people were not healthy, said Stokes: First, there's the age of the study participants—50 to 75—a period when disease is most likely to take hold. Second is the simple fact that so few Americans who are healthy appear able to lose weight and keep it off. The biology of a healthy person works hard to regain lost weight.

On the face of it, the findings may suggest that losing weight doesn't help an obese person to improve his or her odds of living a long life.

It doesn't, says Stokes: "We would never claim that healthy weight loss is a bad idea," he said. When a person purposely loses weight, his or her health status clearly improves, he added.

Instead, Stokes said, his findings make an important methodological point: that researchers who fail to ask people what their highest weight was will miss a whole class of people who are probably in the process of dying prematurely of obesity-related diseases. These people may have a "normal healthy weight," and they are counted by researchers as normal and healthy. But they are probably anything but, said Stokes.

As a result of such methodological oversights, the researchers wrote, "the burden of overweight and obesity on mortality is likely substantially larger than commonly appreciated." Despite stabilizing or even declining rates of obesity, they added, "this may have serious implications for the future of life expectancy in the United States." A pattern of decades in which each birth cohort was heavier than the last could "exert upward pressure on U.S mortality levels for many years to come."

Life & Style

Streisand apologizes for remarks on Michael Jackson accusers

By JOCELYN NOVECK
AP NATIONAL WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Barbra Streisand apologized Saturday for her remarks about Michael Jackson and two men who have accused him of sexual abuse, saying that she should have chosen her words more carefully and that she admires the accusers for "speaking their truth."

Streisand had received bitter criticism online after she was quoted in The Times of London as saying that Jackson's accusers were "thrilled to be there" during the alleged abuse, which "didn't kill them."

After an initial statement Saturday to The Associated Press in which she sought to clarify her remarks, the superstar of song, stage and screen posted an apology online that went further.

"I am profoundly sorry for any pain or misunderstanding I caused by not choosing my words more carefully about Michael Jackson and his victims," she wrote.

"I didn't mean to dismiss the trauma these boys experienced in any way," she wrote. "Like all survivors of sexual assault, they will have to carry this for the rest of their lives. I feel deep remorse and I hope that James and Wade know that I truly respect and admire them for speaking their truth."

The apology went far beyond the earlier statement to the AP, in which she elaborated on her published remarks, saying she felt "nothing but sympathy" for the men, Wade Robson and James Safechuck, who accuse the late star of molesting them as children.

She wrote in that earlier statement: "To be crystal clear, there is no situation or circumstance where it is OK for the innocence of children to be taken advantage of by anyone."

The remarks in question came deep into a wide-ranging interview with The Times. Asked about Jackson, Streisand was quoted as saying she "absolutely" believed Robson and Safechuck, who make their allegations in the recent HBO documentary "Leaving Neverland."

Jackson's estate has condemned the HBO documentary. Jackson, who died in 2009, was found not guilty in 2005 of charges he molested a 13-year-old boy.

In this Dec. 14, 1986, file photo, singers Barbra Streisand and Michael Jackson attend the Scopus Awards of the American Friends of the Hebrew University ceremony in Los Angeles. AP

'Thrones' actress Emilia Clarke says she's had 2 aneurysms

NEW YORK (AP)—"Game of Thrones" actress Emilia Clarke revealed Thursday that she has had two life-threatening aneurysms, and two brain surgeries, since the show began.

An unknown actress before landing the role, Clarke had just finished filming her first season as Daenerys Targaryen, the "Mother of Dragons," on the HBO fantasy series when she had the first aneurysm in 2011 at age 24 while working out at a London gym.

"Just when all my childhood dreams seemed to have come true, I nearly lost my mind and then my life," Clarke writes in a first-person story in The New Yorker . "I've never told this story publicly, but now it's time."

Clarke said she had been healthy all her life, but was suffering from serious stress when the artery burst in her brain. Much of it came from constant press questions about the nudity of her character, a conquering queen, in the show's first episode.

"I always got the same question: some variation of 'You play such a strong woman, and yet you take off your clothes. Why?'" Clarke writes. "In my head, I'd respond, 'How many men do I need to kill to prove myself?'"

She said she suffered a subarachnoid hemorrhage, which can very easily be fatal. She was unable to speak her full name even weeks later.

The second surgery, which was more invasive and involved opening her skull, came after Clarke finished shooting the third season.

"I looked as though I had been through a war more gruesome than any that Daenerys experienced," Clarke writes. "I emerged from the operation with a drain coming out of my head. Bits of my skull had been replaced by titanium. These days, you can't see the scar that curves from my scalp to my ear, but I didn't know at first that it wouldn't be visible."

And, she adds, there was "the constant worry about cognitive or sensory losses."

She recovered fully, however, and was able to keep the problems from the media with one exception.

"Six weeks after the surgery, the National Enquirer ran a short story," Clarke writes. "A reporter asked me about it and I denied it."

R Kelly defense emerges, including saying accusers are lying

CHICAGO (AP)—R. Kelly yelled through tears in a recent TV interview before an audience numbering in the millions, saying he's in a fight for his life to disprove sexual abuse charges. That fight will ultimately be waged in court, with the only audience that matters numbering just 12 jurors.

While the day lawyers deliver opening statements to jurors inside a Cook County courtroom is still many months or even years away, court filings as well as comments by the R&B star himself and his attorney after charges in February provide clues about an emerging legal strategy.

Signs are they intend to question the veracity of his accusers and argue that, if he had sex with them, it was consensual and he thought they were of age. His attorney has also signaled he'll push to have some counts tossed on grounds statutes of limitation ran out or because some are too closely related to crimes for which Kelly was acquitted at his 2008 child pornography trial.

Kelly, 52, was right in more ways than one when he cursed during the interview with Gayle King of "CBS This Morning," saying: "I'm fighting for my ... life." If convicted on all ten counts of aggravated sexual abuse of three underage girls and one adult, the Grammy winner faces an effective life sentence of up to 70 years in prison.

The defense is expected to fine tune their argument over coming months that Kelly's accusers are misrepresenting the facts. For now, there's not much finesse.

"All of them are lying," Kelly told King in his only full interview since being charged. "I have been assassinated," he said. Kelly's lead attorney, Steve Greenberg, also told reporters the day of Kelly's arrest, "I think all the women are lying, yes."

At a Friday pretrial hearing, prosecutors said they weren't immediately providing the defense with a copy of a video they say shows Kelly having sex with one of the minors because it's considered child pornography and shouldn't be distributed to anyone.

"The state's going to have to give it to us. They can't play hide the ball," Greenberg told reporters outside court later. "We're entitled to see the tape."

He said the prosecutor's office has handed over some evidence but still holds the bulk of it.

"I was expecting everything by this point," he said. "You should be in a position when you indict somebody the next day to turn over all the (evidence)."

Museum is glad to finally hear: Yes, it's really a Van Gogh

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)—A painting at a Connecticut museum that has long been thought to be by Vincent Van Gogh has been authenticated as such by Dutch researchers.

The Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford announced Friday that the oil painting "Vase with Poppies" has been verified by researchers at the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam as having been painted by the Dutch artist in 1886, just after he moved to Paris.

It has been in the museum's collection since 1957.

Its authenticity was called into question in 1990 by art historian and Van Gogh expert Walter Feilchenfeldt, who raised concerns about many purported Van Goghs around the world, the Hartford Courant reported. The artwork was taken out of museum displays and shelved.

Years later, with advances in technology and knowledge of Van Gogh, the museum decided to revisit the question.

It was examined initially at the Atheneum, where a digital X-ray revealed an underpainting that looked like a self-portrait, which added to confidence about its authenticity.

The museum in Amsterdam analyzed the artwork's paint, materials and style to conclude it was indeed done by Van Gogh.

"One can say that slowly but surely, real progress is being made in Van Gogh studies. Some of these floaters even turned out to be firmly anchored in Van Gogh's oeuvre, and 'Vase with Poppies,' I am happy to say, is one of them," said Louis van Tilborgh, a senior researcher at the Van Gogh Museum.

The artwork fits stylistically with other floral paintings he made shortly after arriving in Paris.

The Atheneum now officially has two Van Goghs in its collection. The other is a self-portrait painted in 1887.

"Vase with Poppies" will go back on display in April.

"These studies have revealed just how much we still need to learn about Vincent and his growth as a painter, new to Paris and exploring new avenues for his art," Wadsworth CEO Thomas Loughman said.

This undated photo provided by the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art shows a painting of poppies, oil on canvas. AP

Adele and Jennifer Lawrence whoop it up at NYC gay bar

NEW YORK (AP)—Bar patrons in New York's Greenwich Village were in the right place at the right time when Adele and Jennifer Lawrence showed up.

Adele

The Daily News reports Grammy-winning singer Adele and her Oscar-winning actress pal hit the gay bar Pieces on Friday night, to the delight of the crowd.

They drank and danced and schmoozed, hugging shirtless men and taking selfies while the crowd applauded.

They danced to Kylie Minogue and played a drinking game.

And Adele participated in a game show hosted by a drag queen and introduced herself as a married, stay-at-home mom.

Lawrence

Adele has long been a favorite in the LGBTQ community. She told Time magazine in 2015 that she couldn't wait to find out who her young son's "girlfriend or his boyfriend is going to be. ... Whatever my kid wants to do or be I will always support him no matter what."

Texas country singer dies when gun accidentally discharges

THE WOODLANDS, Texas (AP) — A country music singer has died in Texas after his manager says a revolver he was handling during a music video shoot accidentally discharged.

Montgomery County Justice of the Peace Wayne Mack says 35-year-old Justin Carter died last weekend at his apartment in The Woodlands, north of Houston. Carter's manager, Mark Atherton, tells KTRK-TV the singer was using the gun as a prop for a music video he was filming when it went off.

Carter had released the single "Love Affair" just days before his death on iTunes and other music services. A YouTube channel also carries several of his music videos.

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office is investigating Carter's death. A spokesman for the office did not return phone messages seeking additional details.

Egyptian singer banned after claiming lack of free speech

CAIRO (AP) — An Egyptian singer has been banned from performing in her home country after suggesting that it does not respect free speech.

A video clip circulated online shows Sherine Abdel-Wahab, during a performance in Bahrain, saying: "Here I can say whatever I want. In Egypt, anyone who talks gets imprisoned."

Egypt's Musicians Union responded late Friday by barring the singer, popularly known by her first name, from performing. It also summoned her for questioning.

Samir Sabry, a pro-government lawyer with a reputation for moral vigilantism and suing celebrities, filed a complaint against the singer accusing her of "insulting Egypt and inviting suspicious rights groups to interfere in Egypt's affairs."

Last year, Sherine was sentenced to six months in prison over a similar clip from a concert in which she joked that the Nile is polluted. The sentence was suspended upon appeal. She apologized for the remark, calling it a "bad joke."

The singer, who hosts the Arabic version of "The Voice," apologized again after the latest remarks in a TV interview aired late Friday, saying she was joking.

"I am very tired. I made a mistake. I am sorry. I appeal the president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, who is our father. I feel that I was persecuted. I did nothing. I love Egypt," she said.

Egyptian authorities have waged an unprecedented crackdown on dissent since President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi led the military overthrow of an elected but divisive Islamist president in 2013. The local media is dominated by pro-government outlets that attack anyone seen as criticizing the country or its leaders, and several people have been jailed or fined for violating vaguely written laws outlawing such criticism.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Service planned for Keith Flint of The Prodigy fame

LONDON (AP)—The surviving members of the band The Prodigy have invited fans of the late Keith Flint to line a procession route ahead of a private service celebrating his life on March 29. The band tweeted Saturday that a church service for Flint will be for family and close friends only but that speakers would be provided so fans outside can hear. The Prodigy star took his own life in early March at the age of 49. The service will take place in Essex about 40 miles (65 kilometers) northeast of London. Flint was the fiery frontman of the dance-electronica band known for hits including Firestarter and Breathe. Following his death, The Prodigy cancelled all upcoming shows.

Donny and Marie Osmond announce end of Las Vegas residency

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Donny and Marie Osmond say they will end their Las Vegas show later this year, concluding an 11-year run on the Strip. The brother-sister duo made the announcement during an appearance on "Good Morning America" on Thursday. Their final performance at the Flamingo Las Vegas is scheduled for Nov. 16. According to the casino, the duo launched their residency in September 2008, planning for just a six-week concert engagement. The casino says the residency was extended again and again, marking a decade of performances last year. The pair says they will continue performing in some fashion.

First artificial intelligence Google Doodle features Bach

MOUNTAIN VIEW, Calif. (AP) — Google is celebrating composer Johann Sebastian Bach with its first artificial intelligence-powered Doodle. Thursday's animated Google Doodle shows the composer playing an organ in celebration of his March 21, 1685, birthday under the old Julian calendar. It encourages users to compose their own two-measure melody. Google says the Doodle uses machine learning to "harmonize the custom melody into Bach's signature music style." Bach's chorales were known for having four voices carrying their own melodic line. To develop the AI Doodle, Google teams created a machine-learning model that was trained on 306 of Bach's chorale harmonizations. Another team worked to allow machine learning to occur within the web browser instead of on its servers. The Doodle will prompt users who are unsure of how to interact with the animated graphic.

Reel-y? New beer can double as motion picture film developer

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (AP)— Kodak says a new beer hitting the market can be used to develop its Super 8 movie film.

Dogfish Head Craft Brewery in Delaware created its SuperEIGHT beer after a conversation with people at Kodak, the upstate New York technology company most famous for its photographic roots.

Dogfish learned from Kodak that heightened levels of acidity and vitamin C in certain beers could make them a processing agent for film. That inspired the brewery to design such a beer. Kodak helped by testing it.

Dogfish founder Sam Calagione says he'll document his summer travels on Super 8 film that will be developed in SuperEIGHT beer and turned into a short film.

AP

In this undated photo provided by Dogfish Head Craft Brewery, cans of Dogfish's SuperEight beer are displayed on a table in Milton, Del.

The beer, made with pear, mango, berries, kiwi, quinoa and salt, is set for national distribution next month.

Friends in time of need pull away after mom sobers up

DEAR ABBY: I am a single mother of two young children.

I decided to have gastric bypass surgery several years ago. Nine months after the procedure, I began drinking alcohol. The drinking became progressively heavier, and within a few months I was a full-blown alcoholic. It's as if I gave up binge eating for binge drinking. It took a year of struggle to stop, with the help of my friends and family, who pushed me to seek inpatient treatment.

I am now almost three months sober. But with sobriety I have lost a lot of the kindness from my support system. Despite my many apologies, some have told me of their disgust for me, and others have cut ties to me completely.

I believe their efforts to encourage me to seek help were driven by the fact I was a drunk mom. They wanted help for me so I could be a fit parent. However, now that I am in recovery, they no longer want to be a part of my life. The shame is real, and so is the loneliness.

I am now at a point where I need to ask: Am I justified to feel insulted by their lack of support and happiness for me now that I'm healthy and being the best mom I can? Or should I accept that I really messed up and be grateful I had help at all?

SOBER BUT SAD IN IOWA

DEAR SOBER BUT SAD: It would be healthier to keep your eye on the positive and be grateful for the help you were given. It would also be healthier for you to associate with people who make you feel good about yourself, which may not be your family and current friends. In the past I have advised that sometimes it's necessary to build a support network, or "family of choice." And this is what I'm recommending you do.

DEAR ABBY: I turned 17 last month. I have a boyfriend who is 20, but my parents don't know about him yet. He wants to get an apartment and have me move in with him on my 18th birthday. However, I promised my mother and father that I would take care of them. I want him to find an apartment nearby, with the promise that I'll move in with him when I'm ready. How can I do that without disappointing him or hurting my parents' feelings?

UNDECIDED IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR UNDECIDED: Stop hiding this man from your parents because what you're doing is immature and dishonest. If his feelings for you are sincere, he would want to meet them, and he wouldn't ask you to do anything you weren't ready to do.

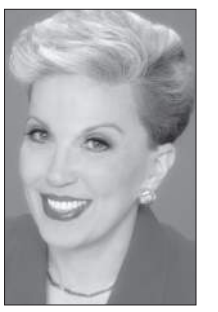
While the idea of moving in with him may seem romantic, there are more important things you need to accomplish before you do. First among them is to become self-supporting so you can live independently ON YOUR OWN. That way, if things don't work out with him as you would like, you won't be out on the street with nowhere to go.

Children weren't put on this Earth to spend their adult lives taking care of their parents. Unless yours are the exception, both of them should be young and vigorous enough to take care of each other.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

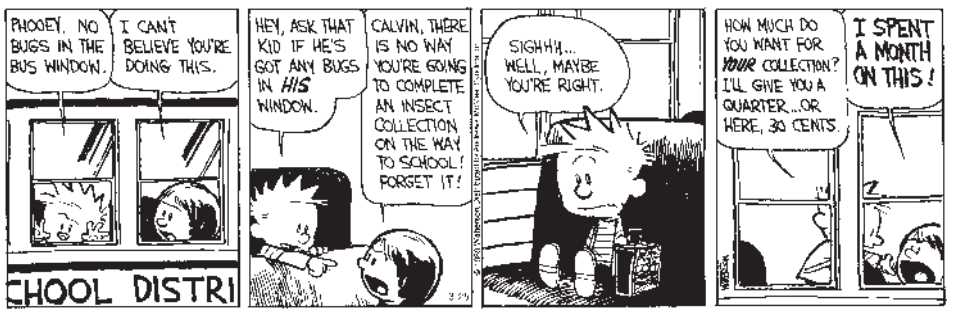


Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

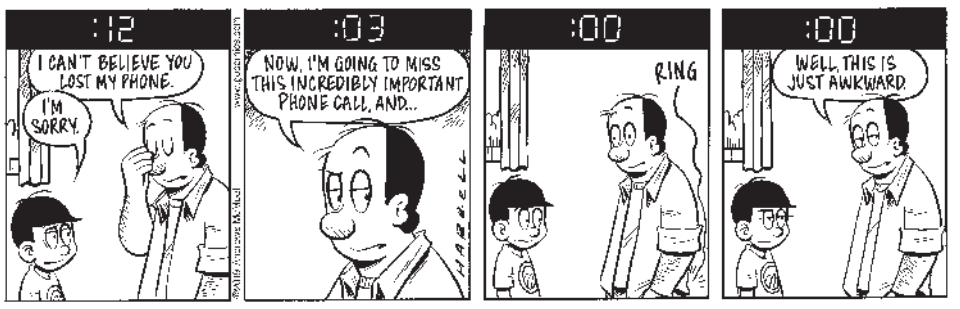

PHOOEY. NO BUGS IN THE BUS WINDOW.
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE DOING THIS.
HEY, ASK THAT KID IF HE'S GOT ANY BUGS IN HIS WINDOW.
CALVIN, THERE IS NO WAY YOU'RE GOING TO COMPLETE AN INSECT COLLECTION ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL! FORGET IT!
SIGHHH... WELL, MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT.
HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT FOR YOUR COLLECTION? I'LL GIVE YOU A QUARTER...OR HERE, 30 CENTS.
I SPENT A MONTH ON THIS!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

BARK BARK ARF ARF YAP YAP ARF ARF BARK BARK ARF ARF
ARF ARF ARF ARF ARF ARF ARF ARF
I'VE WORKED ON THAT BENJI IMPERSONATION FOR MONTHS.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

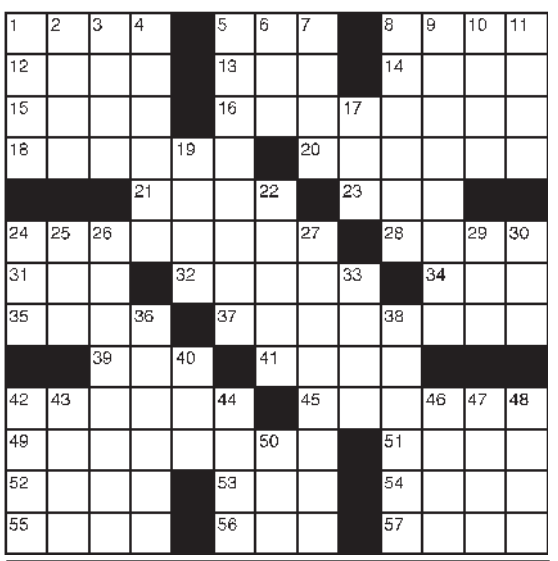
ACROSS
1 Battery fluid
5 Sandwich meat
8 Barks
12 Leaf
13 Out — limb
14 Ganges wrap
15 Warner —
16 Naughtiness
18 Flashing disco light
20 Trumpet's cousin
21 Legal wrong
23 Wee dollop
24 Sushi bar bowlful
28 NYC gallery
31 Dos Passos trilogy
32 Fizzy drinks
34 Bankroll
35 Humorist Sahl
37 Chooses the wrong actor
39 Prattle
41 Unpaid TV spots (Abbr.)
42 John of "Full House"
45 Morals
49 Blunders
51 "Damn Yankees" vamp
52 Celestial bear
53 Hosp. section
54 McGregor of film
55 Euclidean subj.
56 Burst
57 Orange veggies

DOWN
1 LAPD alerts
2 Shopper's aid
3 Mr. Stravinsky
4 Explorer Hernando
5 Where the school day starts
6 Blackbird
7 Fem. counterpart
8 Hindu retreat
9 Colorful arcs
10 Gratis
11 Winnow
17 Massachusetts cape
19 Pear choice
22 Dutch bloom
24 Silent
25 Equal (Pref.)
26 Sea of the North Atlantic
27 Refuses, as an offer
29 Wrestling surface
30 Billboards
33 "Shoo!"
36 Large gong
38 Actress Judd
40 Fluffy neckpiece
42 Overconfident
43 Lose energy
44 Omit
46 Hawk-eyes' home
47 Chowder morsel
48 Without
50 Author Umberto

Solution time: 26 mins.

R	A	P		A	S	T	A		P	U	L	P
I	C	U		G	A	I	T		E	G	A	L
M	A	C	K	E	R	E	L		A	H	O	Y
S	I	E	N	N	A		A	I	R			
			E	T	H		S	A	L	M	O	N
G	A	Z	E	S		M	E	N		O	R	A
O	W	E	S		P	A	S		R	O	C	S
T	R	U		H	A	Y		J	O	N	A	H
O	Y	S	T	E	R		P	U	T			
			U	M	A			S	O	L	D	E
S	H	I	N		S	E	A	T	R	O	U	T
H	A	R	I		O	M	N	I		S	P	A
O	D	E	S		O	O	N			S	E	T

Last Friday's Answer 03-25



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jenny Slate, 37; Sarah Jessica Parker, 54; Marcia Cross, 57; Elton John, 72.

Happy Birthday: Travel about this year. Expand your mind and interests. Get a handle on your finances, and discover how to gain power through knowledge and adapting to the changes that come your way. Personal improvements mentally, physically and emotionally will encourage greater insight into life, love and happiness. Set reasonable goals, and make responsible decisions. Choose a peaceful path. Your numbers are 4, 10, 19, 24, 30, 34, 42.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* An energetic approach to earning a living and taking care of matters that can influence your standard of living will bring high returns. Reward your efforts by taking time to relax and rejuvenate. You'll be able to keep the momentum flowing. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Stir the pot to bring about positive change. A unique but reliable option will give you an idea that is sure to please someone you want in your life personally or professionally. Think big, but don't go over your budget. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Don't take a chance when it comes to physical encounters. Stick to what you know, and know enough to walk away from anyone using persuasive devices to get you to do or try something that is risky or could lead to injury. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* You'll have some good ideas, but before you proceed, check all the facts and details before you make a commitment. You are overdue for a change, so don't hesitate when you should be taking action. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Observe before you jump into something you are not fully familiar with. Negotiations will help you gain ground if you use your skills, experience and attributes to barter for a better deal. Romance is highlighted. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* You'll accomplish the most if you take the path of least resistance. There is no point in arguing or getting all worked up over something you cannot change. Focus on what's doable to gain insight as well as headway. ✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* An opportunity will unfold through a friend or relative. Attend an event that offers meeting people who share your interests. Take action and fix any issue that is disrupting your personal or domestic life. Personal improvement is encouraged. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Take better care of your health and well-being. Arguments will not bring the results you want. Focus on the ideas you want to flesh out and the information you need to get things done. A change will do you good. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* You'll need to drum up all the charm and charisma you can to avoid being taken for granted. Don't say yes to someone who exaggerates or isn't truthful about what he or she wants from you. Learn to say no. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Take a greater interest in what's happening in your personal life. Engage in the changes that need to be made at home in order to make your surroundings peaceful and more equipped to fit your needs and your lifestyle. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Use your intelligence and take your time when dealing with situations that are unstable. It's best to be certain and to observe what's happening before you do or say something you'll regret. Make adjustments based on facts. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Secret matters should be brought out into the open before you move forward. Question anything or anyone that is vague or appears to be covering up what's actually happening. Trust your intuition, and get the facts first. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are energetic, outgoing and sensitive. You are adaptable and persistent.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

8		3	6					4
	1						7	
			8		1	5		2
	2		1			4	6	9
6	9			7			5	1
3	4	1			6		8	
4		7	2		8			
	6						2	
1					5	7		3

Difficulty Level ★ 3/25

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

5	1	4	2	6	7	3	8	9
3	2	6	9	5	8	7	1	4
9	7	8	1	3	4	6	2	5
4	5	1	8	9	6	2	3	7
2	8	7	3	1	5	4	9	6
6	9	3	7	4	2	8	5	1
8	6	2	5	7	9	1	4	3
7	3	5	4	2	1	9	6	8
1	4	9	6	8	3	5	7	2

Difficulty Level ★★★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

GREENLAND WEDDING PRACTICES Solution: 9 letters

G	E	C	I	O	H	C	I	T	C	R	A	T	S	T
S	A	S	L	A	M	I	N	A	L	I	A	R	T	O
P	O	R	B	L	A	N	K	E	T	A	O	B	H	O
A	K	C	D	F	C	A	R	V	I	N	G	B	G	L
R	O	R	I	E	R	T	A	U	I	Y	U	A	I	S
K	O	D	C	A	N	O	O	V	T	I	N	N	L	Ⓗ
A	C	N	I	S	L	B	O	I	L	O	U	A	Ⓤ	T
Y	A	O	H	T	I	R	L	D	R	I	E	Ⓝ	I	E
D	L	A	R	R	Y	A	C	A	T	S	Ⓣ	T	C	C
S	R	I	A	E	T	O	K	O	V	U	S	L	O	N
E	P	C	M	I	H	S	S	S	S	O	O	E	I	A
S	L	I	P	A	D	T	I	D	H	T	R	R	N	I
U	O	S	R	R	F	N	A	A	H	N	U	P	S	L
O	O	U	U	I	G	S	N	E	T	T	I	M	P	L
H	W	M	G	S	T	O	O	B	F	U	R	S	E	A

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Alliance, Animals, Anoraks, Antler, Approval, Arctic, Beads, Blanket, Boat, Boots, Botanic, Build, Caribou, Carving, Choice, Cloth, Coins, Cook, Costume, Dance, Drum, Family, Feast, Feather, Furs, Garden, Gifts, Hospitality, Host, House, Hunt, Inuit, Ivory, Lights, Mittens, Music, Outdoor, Parka, Rock, Seals, Share, Sing, Social, Spirit, Tools, Trail, Wool

Last Friday's Answer: Appearances

To purchase **WONDERWORD** books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

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REQ Day & Night Child Care

Job Vacancy Announcement

(4) Child Care Workers
- Willing to work flexible hours
- Must be reliable
- Medical Background is a plus
- Willing to take pre-service training

(3) Teachers
- BSE/ED Graduate
- Three years' experience in head start, pre-school and afterschool teaching
- Must be computer literate
- Must have tutorial experience
- Willing to take pre-service training

Salary commensurate with experience and qualifications.

If interested, please email resume to reqchildcare@yahoo.com

SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Commercial Cleaner and Maintenance

If interested, bring resume and police clearance to Saipan International School. No telephone calls please.

We are an equal opportunity employer pay no less than the CNMI minimum wage.

NEW WAVE DENTAL

Is looking to hire one (1) employee to work as

Insurance Claims Clerk
(New/Full-Time)

- Must have minimum of (1) years working experience in dental insurance claim processing
- Must be familiar with coding specific for dental procedures electronic claim processing and related computer skills.
- Must have reference and letter of recommendation.
- We are not willing to train individuals lacking the necessary skills for this position.

Drop resume with photo to our office located in Micro Beach Road Saipan
No Phone calls please

NEW WAVE DENTAL

Is looking to hire one (1) employee to work as

Dental Assistant/ Lab Technician
Renewal (Full-Time)

- Applicants must have experience in denture repair and fabrication
- Must be able to set tooth pontics in wax ready for lab-processing.
- Experience in assisting required.

Drop resume with photo to our office located in Micro Beach Road Saipan
No Phone calls please

NEW WAVE DENTAL

Is looking to hire one (1) employee to work as

Dental Assistant
New (Full-Time)

- Minimum 3 years Clinical experience required
- Must be able to assist dentist, know sterilization set-up instruments, take radiographs.
- Must have reference and letter of recommendation.
- We are not willing to train individuals lacking the necessary skills for this position.

Drop resume with photo to our office located in Micro Beach Road Saipan
No Phone calls please

Marianas Medical Center

is seeking for U.S. qualified workers for the following position:

(1) Nursing Station Coordinator

We're seeking a dynamic individual that can provide administrative support for all our healthcare providers in the clinic. Duties include (but are not limited to) scheduling appointments, responding to patient inquiries, reviewing medical records, preparing referral documents and working closely with insurance companies. Must be a graduate from a U.S. accredited school of nursing. Must have at least two (2) years of relevant work experience in a clinic or hospital setting. Must have the ability to communicate with others (both verbal and written) and have the ability to multi-task and work well under pressure in a fast-paced work environment.

All positions close 12:00pm on Saturday, April 6, 2019.
Applications are available at the Marianas Medical Center. Applications should include a resume and evidence of education degree(s), professional licenses or certifications claimed. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Testing may be required for some positions.
Marianas Medical Center is an equal opportunity employer.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP19-CHCC/CGC-SYSTEMS OF CARE-010
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: APRIL 10, 2019 TIME: 03:00PM

"WRAPAROUND PROCESS TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE"

COPIES OF THE RFP PACKET MAY BE PICKED –UP AT CHCC PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY DIVISION-MEDICAL SUPPLY STORAGE FACILITY LOWER BASE SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ PRISCILLA M. IAKOPO
CHC DIRECTOR OF P&S

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
(In-House Annoucement)

OPENING DATE: March 18, 2019 * CLOSING DATE: April 3, 2019: 10:00 A.M.

NMHC JVA No.	Positions:	Salary:
2019-002	Loan Specialist I	$23,706.21-$26,131.39- per annum (Classified Position)

Employment application form, detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information may be picked up, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan during regular business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

All applicants must complete and submit the NMHC Employment Application Form together with required documents that are listed in the Employment Application Package. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. NMHC and all its properties are drug-free zones; therefore, selected applicant will be subject to pre-employment drug screening.

It is the policy of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) that the merit system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by its personnel regulations and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-9447/6866 or by email to jjmuna@nmhc.gov.mp. NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.

/s/
JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

NORTHERN MARIANAS COLLEGE
Procurement & Property Management Office
P.O. Box 501250 CK, Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
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E-mail: ppmo@marianas.edu • Website: www.marianas.edu

INVITATION FOR BIDS

NMC IFB 19-002

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF 5 NEW VEHICLES

Northern Marianas College is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the procurement and delivery of 5 New Vehicles (4 each Delivered to the NMC-CREES Main Office on Saipan and 1 each Delivered to NMC-CREES Station on Tinian).

Specifications and Scope of Work packages may be picked up at the **NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. O, commencing Friday, March 15th between the hours of 9:00-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m.**

Bidders located outside of the CNMI may request a copy of the IFB via email to Robert Suzuki (robert.suzuki@arianas.edu).

Bid Packages are due no later than 10:00 a.m., April 15, 2019, CNMI date and time at the Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus, Procurement Office, Bldg. O, Saipan, MP 96950. You may request a copy of the NMC IFB 19-002 packet attention Mr. Robert Suzuki at email robert.suzuki@marianas.edu.

Paid for by 100% Federal Funds through the USDA-NIFA authorized under the Hatch Act, as amended August 11, 1955, award # 2018-31100 (Regular) / Smith Lever Act section 3b & 3c, award#2015-41100.

In accordance with Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, Local Preference is not available to local businesses for this procurement.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The NMC reserves the right to reject any and/or all bid offers for any reason and waive any defect in said bids, or cancel in part or its entirety this IFB, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College. All costs incurred by the proposer to prepare a response to this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the proposer. All submittals shall become the property of NMC.

/s/ Robert Suzuki
Acting Procurement & Property Manager

/s/ Patricia Coleman
Interim Dean of CREES

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Verlander, Sale agree to contract extensions

HOUSTON (AP)—Justin Verlander and the Houston Astros are going to continue their successful partnership for a while longer.

Verlander and the Astros have agreed to a contract adding an additional $66 million in guaranteed money for 2020 and '21, a person with direct knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press.

The person spoke Saturday on condition of anonymity because the deal had not been announced. The agreement was first reported by KRIV-FOX 26.

A 36-year-old right-hander, Verlander is due $28 million in 2019, the final guaranteed season of a $180 million, seven-year deal he signed with Detroit before the 2013 season. That contract included a $22 million option for 2020 that would have become guaranteed if Verlander finished among the top five in Cy Young Award voting this year.

Verlander was traded from Detroit to Houston on Aug. 31, 2017, and helped the Astros win their first World Series that season. The 2011 AL MVP and Cy Young Award winner, he finished second in Cy Young voting last season after going 16-9 with a 2.52 ERA in 34 starts. He pitched 214 innings and led the AL with 290 strikeouts.

The seven-time All-Star, entering his 15th season, spent his entire big league career with the Tigers before the 2017 trade. In his MVP season, Verlander won a career-high 24 games and had a career-low 2.40 ERA, which led the AL. He pitched 251 innings and struck out 250 batters that season, which were both the most in the AL.

Verlander takes great pride in his durability and has pitched more than 200 innings in 11 seasons, leading the AL in three of those years.

Verlander celebrated by striking out nine during four innings of two-hit ball in a 5-0 win over Miami. Roberto Osuna, Hector Rondon and Ryan Pressley followed with a hitless inning each, and Jose Altuve hit his first homer of the spring.

Meanwhile, Chris Sale is the latest All-Star to agree to a long-term extension before hitting free agency.

The left-hander agreed to a five-year, $145 million deal with the defending World Series champion Boston Red Sox, the club announced Saturday morning.

Sale, who turns 30 next week, was set to become a free agent after this season. He will make $15 million this season, the final club option year of the five-year, $32.5 million extension he signed with the Chicago White Sox in 2013. The new five-year deal, with an annual average value of $29 million, begins in 2020.

Sale has been one of the game's best pitchers the last seven seasons, winning 99 games and averaging 198 innings per season with a 2.91 ERA and 10.9 strikeouts per nine innings. In 2018, he went 12-4 with a 2.11 ERA and 237 strikeouts in 158 innings and started the All-Star Game for a third consecutive time.

While he never has won a Cy Young Award, he has finished in the top six of the voting in each of the past seven seasons and four times has finished in the top four.

AP

Boston Red Sox starting pitcher Chris Sale (41) works in the first inning of a spring training baseball game against the Atlanta Braves Saturday, March 16, 2019, in Fort Myers, Fla.

Goldschmidt signs $130M deal

Paul Goldschmidt was made for St. Louis. The Cardinals were made for Goldschmidt.

They tied the knot Thursday when Goldschmidt agreed to a five-year, $130 million contract extension.

The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity since Goldschmidt won't take his physical until Friday, with a press conference tentatively scheduled for Saturday.

The Cardinals have been down this road before. They traded for Mark McGwire. He stayed and became a legend. They traded for Matt Holliday. They went to two World Series together, winning one.

Now, after trading for their latest and greatest slugger, the man who has been the most underpaid player in all of baseball, has decided to stick around, too.

Really, anyone who knows Goldschmidt, 31, could have predicted this. Goldschmidt's quiet-but-serious personality is ideal for St. Louis. And St. Louis' no-frills atmosphere, where they appreciate substance over style, is perfect for Goldschmidt.

"I knew he'd love it there," says Los Angeles Angels slugger Albert Pujols, who will be enshrined in Cooperstown for his performance in St. Louis. "It was the perfect fit. I even tried to see if he wanted to buy my house."

There was no question that Goldschmidt had every intention of sticking around when he was traded from the Arizona Diamondbacks, and when we chatted for nearly 30 minutes three weeks ago, it was just a matter of when the contract extension would be signed.

Goldschmidt was blown away how easy the transition was after coming to a new organization, and the Cardinals felt as if Goldschmidt had been around for 20 years.

"He comes exactly as advertised," Cardinals veteran pitcher Adam Wainwright said, "because I don't think you can have higher words of praise going into something. So many of his former teammates text me and said, 'Dude, this guy is going to be your all-time favorite teammate. Just wait until you see it.' "

Well, they sure saw it, and made sure the guy who has finished three times among the top three in MVP voting would finally be paid what he's worth.

Oh, sure, he cost himself perhaps $125 million when he originally signed a six-year, $32.5 million contract extension with the Diamondbacks before the 2013 season, but never once did he complain.

Casey holds 1-shot lead over Johnson at Innisbrook

PALM HARBOR, Fla. (AP)—The final hour changed the dynamics of the Valspar Championship, just not the lead.

That still belongs to defending champion Paul Casey, and he saw only the upside of having his three-shot margin shrink to one, and going from a final round pairing with a player who is 0 for 195 on the PGA Tour to playing alongside the No. 1 player in the world.

On a Saturday at Innisbrook that began with all 70 players who made the cut still very much in the mix, Casey surged to a three-shot lead until a bogey on the 18th hole for a 3-under 68 that left him one shot ahead of Dustin Johnson.

At stake for Casey is a chance to become the first back-to-back winner of the Valspar Championship since this PGA Tour event began in 2000.

Behind him is Johnson, who is going for his second victory in three starts.

"Of the guys on the leaderboard, he's the one I would want to be paired with, so it doesn't bother me," Casey said. "Obviously, two shots would have been nicer than one, but one is better than level, or one behind."

Johnson had some say in that final margin with one of his best shots of the day, a 9-iron from a bunker a few paces in front of a steep lip to the front shelf of the 18th green, 10 feet behind the hole. He made that for a 67 to get into the final group.

And that was good news for Casey?

"He's the best player in the world. That's why I work and I do what I do, because I want to play against the best in the world," Casey said.

He also pointed to Johnson being the favorite, at least in the eyes of thousands of fans on a warm, sun-filled day at Innisbrook, the kind of buzz it had last year when Tiger Woods played for the first time.

"I actually feel very little pressure," Casey said. "You look at my results versus Dustin's. He's the better player, so it's pretty simple. If I go out tomorrow and beat him, I actually might win, plain and simple. Great scenario."

Only it's not that simple, and no one knows better than Casey.

A year ago, he rallied from five shots behind with a 65 and wound up winning by one shot over Woods and Patrick Reed. That's a tribute to Innisbrook, which players regard as one of the purest tests of the year, certainly in Florida.

Casey was at 9-under 204. Eight players had a share of the lead in the third round, and 10 players finished within four shots of the lead.

That starts with Jason Kokrak, winless in his 195 starts as a pro over the better part of eight years. He showed how quickly fortunes can change when he made three birdies in five holes to start the back nine, and then smashed an 8-iron with a breeze at his back that rolled across the 15th green and into the cup for a hole-in-one .

"You can be three, four, five shots out at this golf course and really make some noise if you get it going early," Kokrak said.

Kokrak shot 30 on the back for a 66 and was poised to play in the final group until Johnson made his birdie on the 18th. Luke Donald, a past winner at Innisbrook playing for only the second time this year—and first since January—grinded his way to a 70 and joined Scott Stallings (70) three shots behind. Louis Oosthuizen, who had a 66 despite two bogeys on the last three holes, and Jim Furyk were among those four behind.

Casey seized control with three birdies in a five-hole stretch to start the back nine. But on the final hole, after Johnson made his birdie, Casey went into the first of a series of miniature church-pew bunkers on the 18th, couldn't get to the green and missed his 15-foot par putt.

Mavericks roll past Curry-less Warriors

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Dirk Nowitzki added one more memorable game in his final visit to Oracle Arena, scoring a season-high 21 points and insisting he couldn't remember whether it was a chair or a trash can that he threw into a wall opposite the visitors' locker room at one of his favorite arenas.

Luka Doncic had a triple-double and the Dallas Mavericks capitalized on Stephen Curry's absence to beat the Golden State Warriors 126-91 on Saturday night.

Nowitzki, 40, who is in his 21st and perhaps final season with the Mavericks, got a rare start and a rousing ovation from the Oracle crowd. He came out and torched the Warriors with 10 points in the game's first four minutes, and the Mavs jumped out to a 22-7 lead. They never trailed in the game.

"The last few games I didn't have a good shooting rhythm," Nowitzki said. "Today, I had it early and often."

Golden State dropped out of the top seed in the Western Conference to a half-game behind Denver. With Curry resting, Kevin Durant had 25 points and DeMarcus Cousins scored 19. But the Warriors were 4-of-30 from 3-point range, while the Mavs went 21-of-49 from behind the arc.

"We just couldn't pull together after that slow start and we never could get any traction in the game," Warriors coach Steve Kerr said. "So we just kind of flush this one down the toilet and move on to tomorrow, not much else to do."

Doncic had 23 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists and Dallas ended a 12-game losing streak in Oakland, where it last won in April 2012. The Mavs built their lead to 43 early in the final quarter.

Hornets 124, Celtics 117

In Charlotte, the Hornets had three veterans out of action and three first- or second-year players in the lineup down the stretch. The Hornets hardly looked like a team capable of rallying from an 18-point deficit against the Boston Celtics.

But that is exactly what the Hornets did.

Kemba Walker scored 18 of his game-high 36 points in the fourth quarter and the Hornets rallied to a victory over the Celtics.

"You just keep playing," said Walker, who also had 11 rebounds and nine assists in his 23rd game of 30 or more points this season. "In the league, anything can happen. Once one team gets momentum, things can change really fast."

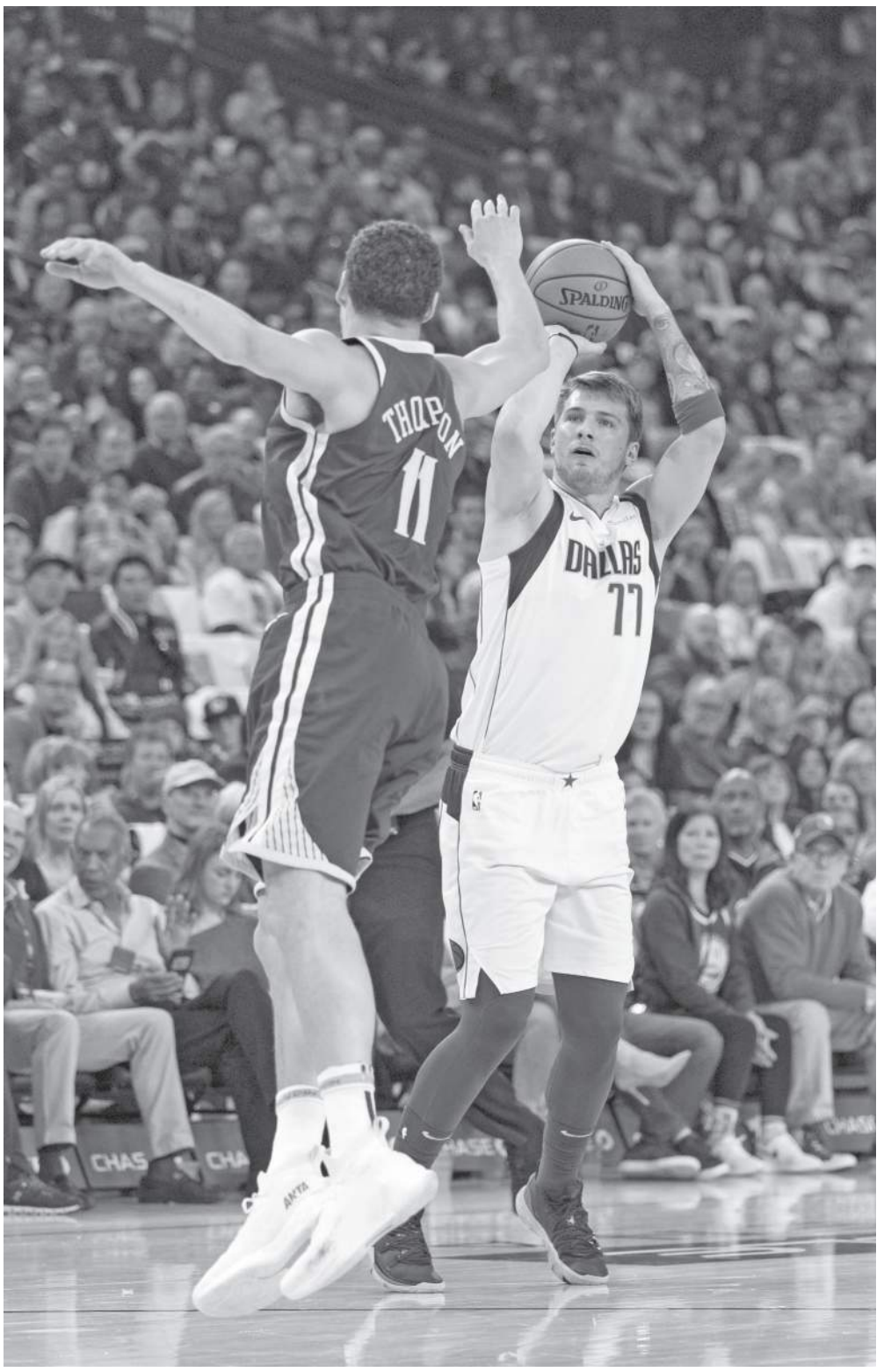
That's what happened as Charlotte closed the game on a 30-5 run that included all 18 of Walker's fourth-quarter points. The Hornets trailed 112-94 with 8:22 remaining.

Hawks 129, 76ers 127

In Atlanta, rookie point guard Trae Young scored 32 points, including the game-winner with a tenth of a second remaining, to give the Hawks a win over Philadelphia.

The Hawks tied the game 127-127 on a layup by Taurean Prince with 27.5 seconds left, then got a final shot when the 76ers allowed the 24-second clock to expire. With 3.5 seconds left, Atlanta's Kevin Huerter inbounded the ball to Young, who made a floater over Jimmy Butler to put the Hawks ahead.

After calling timeout, Philadelphia's inbounds pass hit the rim to end the game.



AP

Dallas Mavericks forward Luka Doncic (77) shoots a three-point basket as Golden State Warriors guard Klay Thompson (11) defends in the first half of an NBA basketball game Saturday, March 23, 2019 in Oakland, Calif.

Trail Blazers 117, Pistons 112

In Portland, Damian Lillard scored 28 points, and the Trail Blazers outscored visiting Detroit 14-3 over the final 4 1/2 minutes en route to the victory.

Al-Farouq Aminu chipped in a season-high 22 points for the Trail Blazers, who won for the sixth time in seven games.

Blake Griffin tallied 27 points, Reggie Jackson added 24 points and Andre Drummond collected 19 points and 11 rebounds for the Pistons.

Jazz 114, Bulls 83

In Chicago, Rudy Gobert notched a double-double of 21 points and 14 rebounds, and six other teammates scored in double figures to boost the Jazz to a rout of Chicago.

The Jazz raced to a 33-18 lead after one quarter, and their 70-36 halftime lead was their largest on the road at the half in the history of the franchise, which began play in the 1974-75 season in New Orleans.

Donovan Mitchell added 16 points for the Jazz, while Joe Ingles (13), Derrick Favors (13), Ricky Rubio (12), Jae Crowder (11) and Raul Neto (10) followed to complement a balanced attack that overwhelmed the Bulls.

Heat 113, Wizards 108

In Washington, Dwyane Wade scored 11 of his team-high 20 points in the fourth quarter as the Heat defeated the Wizards.

The Heat (36-37) are fighting to hold on to the Eastern Conference's final playoff spot, and this victory gave them a one-game edge over idle Orlando (35-38). The two teams will meet Tuesday in Miami.

Wade went 5-for-7 from the field in the fourth quarter as Miami took charge of a game that swung back and forth throughout the first three periods. The veteran guard helped the Heat take a 109-99 lead late.

Timberwolves 112, Grizzlies 99

In Memphis, Karl-Anthony Towns totaled 33 points and 23 rebounds as Minnesota halted a nine-game road losing streak by dominating the third quarter in a victory over the Grizzlies.

The Timberwolves recorded their first road win since beating New York on Feb. 22. They also halted a five-game losing streak, a night after being eliminated from playoff contention.

Towns recorded his seventh straight double-double and 49th overall. He also recorded his 19th 30-point game and fifth career game with at least 30 points and 20 boards.

Kings 112, Suns 103

In Sacramento, Buddy Hield and Harrison Barnes scored 25 points apiece to lead the Kings to a victory over Phoenix.

Marvin Bagley III added 16 points and 11 rebounds for the Kings. Nemanja Bjelica recorded 13 points and a career-best 17 rebounds and De'Aaron Fox had 13 points and nine assists.

Hield made seven 3-pointers to set a franchise single-season record with 245. He broke the mark of Peja Stojakovic (240 in 2003-04), who is now the club's assistant general manager.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Toronto	51	22	.699	—
x-Philadelphia	47	26	.644	4
Boston	43	30	.589	8
Brooklyn	38	36	.514	13.5
New York	14	59	.192	37

Central Division

y-Milwaukee	54	19	.740	—
x-Indiana	44	29	.603	10
Detroit	37	35	.514	16.5
Chicago	21	53	.284	33.5
Cleveland	19	54	.260	35

Southeast Division

Miami	36	37	.493	—
Orlando	35	38	.479	1
Charlotte	33	39	.458	2.5
Washington	30	44	.405	6.5
Atlanta	26	48	.351	10.5

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Pacific Division

x-Golden State	49	23	.681	—
LA Clippers	43	30	.589	6.5
Sacramento	36	36	.500	13
LA Lakers	31	41	.431	18
Phoenix	17	57	.230	33

Southwest Division

Houston	46	27	.630	—
San Antonio	42	31	.575	4
New Orleans	31	43	.419	15.5
Memphis	29	44	.397	17
Dallas	29	44	.397	17

Northwest Division

x-Denver	49	22	.690	—
Portland	45	27	.625	4.5
Oklahoma City	43	30	.589	7
Utah	43	30	.589	7
Minnesota	33	40	.452	17

x- clinched playoff spot
y- clinched division

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LeBron: Lakers season 'not what we signed up for'

LOS ANGELES—LeBron James described the Los Angeles Lakers' season as "not what we signed up for" after they were officially eliminated from playoff contention.

James will miss the playoffs for the first time since 2005, with a 111-106 defeat to the Brooklyn Nets on Friday ending the Lakers' slim postseason hopes.

Despite tallying 25 points, 14 assists, and nine rebounds, James labelled his performance as "s****y" and said: "Obviously, it's been a tough season for all of us.

"It's not what we signed up for. Throughout the year, things happened. Suspensions, injuries, things of that nature. And just not being able to play sustainable basketball for 48 minutes.

"But you don't even try to wrap your head around it, you just keep pushing. Just try to get better tonight, move onto tomorrow, and go from there.

"Playoffs are never promised. You've got to come out and work. For me personally, you just continue to put the work in and see what you can do to help."

The Lakers' campaign has had its ups - notably a Christmas Day win over the Golden State Warriors and a comeback triumph against the Houston Rockets in the first game after the All-Star break.

However, James suffered a groin tear in the defeat of the Warriors and the victory over the Rockets has been followed by a run of 12 losses in 14 outings.

It remains to be seen how many games James will play down the stretch with no meaning attached to their remaining fixtures.

The 34-year-old added: "I'm probably going to have a conversation with the coaching staff and my trainer and go from there. I'm going to have five months and not play the game. So, you know, hopefully I can be in as many games as possible."

Serena withdraws; Osaka loses, Federer wins

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. (AP)—The new site for the Miami Open suddenly is missing a lot of star power.

Serena Williams withdrew Saturday, blaming a previously undisclosed left knee injury. Less than two hours later, top-ranked Naomi Osaka lost in the third round to tour veteran Hsieh Su-Wei of Taiwan, 4-6, 7-6 (4), 6-3.

Osaka's departure matched the earliest ever in the tournament by a top-seeded woman and jeopardized her No. 1 ranking, depending on results next week.

"I feel like I've dealt with the stress of people asking me do I have pressure because I have the No. 1 next to my name," Osaka said. "I thought I was doing fine with that, but I guess I'm not."

Roger Federer briefly seemed headed for the exit but instead advanced to the third round by rallying past qualifier Radu Albot 4-6, 7-5, 6-3.

"Radu put me through the ringer," Federer said.

No. 2-seeded Alexander Zverev double-faulted 12 times and lost to wild card David Ferrer, 2-6, 7-5, 6-3.

Williams' withdrawal was unexpected because she showed no signs of injury a day earlier while winning her opening match against Rebecca Peterson, 6-3, 1-6, 6-1.

AP
Roger Federer of Switzerland returns to Radu Albot of Moldova during the Miami Open tennis tournament, Saturday, March 23, 2019, in Miami Gardens, Fla.

Williams didn't mention any health issues during a news conference after the match, and the WTA had no information regarding when she was hurt.

Williams' victory Friday was her first at Hard Rock Stadium, the Miami Dolphins' home and the Miami Open's new center court. The tournament moved this year from Key Biscayne, where Williams won eight titles.

"I am disappointed to withdraw," she said in a statement. "It was an amazing experience to play at Hard Rock Stadium this year, and I would like to thank the Miami Open for putting on an amazing event. I hope to be back next year to play at this one-of-a-kind tournament in front of the incredible fans here in Miami."

Federer, a three-time champion, lost serve only once—in the first game—but was on the ropes until he swept the final three games, to the relief of an enthusiastic stadium crowd.

"It was a great atmosphere," Federer said. "It was electric. I think that's why I played so well at the end."

While attendance in the stadium continued to be spotty, outer courts were jammed, and the day session drew a tournament record 32,831 spectators.

Seeded losers on the men's side included No. 10 Karen Khachanov, No. 21 Diego Schwartzman, No. 26 Guido Pella, No. 30 Stan Wawrinka and No. 31 Steve Johnson. In a game of inches, the 5-foot-6 Schwartzman lost to 6-foot-11 Reilly Opelka 6-4, 3-6, 6-4.

Williams was next scheduled to play No. 18-seeded Qiang Wang, who advanced to the fourth round.

Also reaching the women's round of 16 was the 33-year-old Hsieh, who turned pro in 2001 but has achieved the two biggest victories of her career in the past nine months. Her only other win over a No. 1 player came against Simona Halep at Wimbledon last year.

With two-handed groundstrokes from both sides, Hsieh was the steadier player from the baseline against Osaka. When Hsieh closed out match point with a forehand volley winner, she began to cry as the crowd applauded her performance.

Osaka smiled when reminded it was the first time in 64 matches she lost after winning the first set.

"I know—it's depressing," she said. "I was thinking about it right after I lost."

Osaka, 21, has won the past two Grand Slam tournaments. Williams, 37, still hasn't won a tournament since the 2017 Australian Open, before she took a break of more than a year to become a mom. She has played only eight matches this year.

NFL owners to consider expansion of instant replay rules

NEW YORK—After hours and hours of analysis and discussions conducted by the NFL's competition committee, the league's owners could make a move to try to minimize the risk of a another officiating incident similar to the missed pass interference call that potentially cost the New Orleans Saints a trip to the Super Bowl.

When the NFL's annual league meeting kicks off Sunday in Phoenix, a number of other rule change proposals will come under review. But the non-call in the NFC Championship Game between the Saints and the Los Angeles Rams sparked great outrage and calls for a change. Further fueling the debate was the admission by the league that game officials erred in not throwing a flag when Nickell Robey-Coleman decked Saints receiver Tommylee Lewis, preventing him from making late-game catch. A penalty would have put the Saints in scoring position in the closing minutes of regulation of the contest that they eventually lost in overtime.

Until now, the league's owners and coaches have largely opposed the inclusion of pass interference on the list of reviewable plays. But the NFC title game gaffe and ensuing backlash prompted the competition to spend the last two months reviewing the matter, as well as the pros and cons of a rule change.

For any modification of the rule to pass, 24 of the NFL's 32 owners would have to vote in favor. Otherwise, things would stay the same for the coming season.

But, even if owners vote to include the review of pass interference calls, that rule change wouldn't guarantee a costly non-call on a similar play never happens again. Neither of the proposals, which are both one-year trials, put forth by the competition committee on the matter would enable coaches to challenge non-calls. One, however, includes an expansion that would make roughing the passer and hits on defenseless players reviewable.

Teams also will review a proposal submitted by the Kansas City Chiefs, which calls for a change to overtime rules. Currently, the extra period ends if the team that possesses the ball first scores a touchdown. The Chiefs, who lost to the New England Patriots after surrendering a touchdown on the first drive after regulation, want the rule to now allow both teams to possess the ball in overtime.

SIS

From Page 28

his 7 points. Nishimura added 4 points, while Mike Lee's reverse lay up skipped off the backboard and found the bottom of the net to end the period.

In the second canto, the Eagles deployed two and even three players to slow Hudkins down and they managed to neutralize the SIS center. However Nishimura and Ron Muńa helped the Geckos extend their lead at the break, 22-11

When the game resumed, the Geckos turned to their defense to limit the Eagles to 4 markers in the third period. Only Steven Balakrishna and Keoni Yarofalir were able to knock down shots for GCA, while the trio of Nishimura, Hudkins, and Lee, combined for a dozen for SIS, as they pulled away further, 34-15, with only one quarter left.

The Eagles came to life in the closing canto, as they generated 19 markers, but the Geckos played steady on offense and scored 17 to maintain their safe distance. Lance Tumalad had 9 points for GCA in the final canto and all came from the 3-point area, while Balakrishna and Seung Jun Baek combined for the 10 other markers.

Hudkins and Nishimura toscored for SIS after firing 19 points apiece.

With the victory, the Geckos now hold a 5-5 slate, while Grace Christian ended their season with a 3-11 record. The Eagles finished the season at seventh place, ahead of Agape Christian School 2 (0-13), while SIS' ranking has yet to be decided, as it still has two make-up games left.

The Geckos will take on Agape Christian School 1 today at the latter's court in Gualo Rai at 3:30pm, while their last match will be against Saipan Southern High School.

SIS 51—Hudkins 19, Nishimura 19, Lee 6, Muńa 5, Guo 2.

GCA 34—Balakrishna 13, Tumalad 9, Baek 4, Kim 2, Masilungan 2, Ryu 2, Yarofalir 2.

Scoring by quarters: 13-4, 22-11, 34-15, 51-34.

CAROL

From Page 28

round in both the singles and doubles event of her first tournament in Morocco (Mediterranée Avenir/J1 Casablanca).

With her slow start, Lee's ranking did not have significant improvement, as she entered her second competition in the African nation at No. 170. Her French opponent is ranked No. 84 in the ITF Juniors and No. 39 in the Junior Masters. However, Lee beat the odds and stunned Droguet in the title showdown between the Top 2 seeds to have a better finish in the tournament where she first participated two years ago. In 2017, Lee made it only to the quarterfinals of both the singles and doubles events of the ITF/CAT North African Circuit.

BLUE

From Page 28

despite getting a big shot from Bing Nakamura. Nakamura's swing launched the ball past the fence and sent Heath Camacho and J.J. Sablan home, while Harry Moses made the fourth and last run for the Braves, as they were not able to overhaul the deficit.

The Blue Jays had five homer in the semis win, two of them came from J.P. Celis, while the Braves got three. Fleming and J.P. Celis led the Blue Jays with four runs apiece.

J.P. Celis acknowledged and praised his team's blue-collared work ethic during the game.

"The positive things about my team is that we try our best and grind hard," J.P. Celis said.

While J.P. Celis is elated that his team marched into the finale, he acknowledges that his team still has important adjustments to make before they can perform at their best He also noted that they will probably be working more on hitting base hits in preparation for the battle for the championship trophy against the Falcons.

Over 100 join AFC Women's Football Day

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville was filled with more than 100 female players of all ages, as they participated in the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association's AFC Women's Football Day.

NMIFA joined the Asian Football Confederation in observing the International Women's Day (March 8) by holding a 3x3 soccer tournament, which featured competitions in four divisions: U9, U12, women's open, and masters.

Still Playing went on to top the masters category after beating Matansa 1 in the finals, 3-1. Still Playing earned 3 points in Pool B to advance to the title game, while Matansa 1 ruled Pool A after getting 6 points. Kanoa 1 and 2, TanHoldings 1 and 2, and Matansa 2 were the other teams entered in the masters division.

In the women's open, Wuteva clinched the championship after dominating Wanna Be Soccer Players in the finals, 6-3.

Wuteva also led in the elimination round after bagging 12 points, while Wanna Be Soccer Players notched 6 and defeated Super Friends in the tiebreak for the No. 2 spot to take the second finals ticket. Kanoa and Paire also fielded one team each in the division.

In the U12 age group, Betde United prevailed in a best-of-three showdown with Kanoa FC to make it to the champions' circle, while Paire edged Matansa in the finals, 2-1, to top the U9 division.

Paire matched into the final game after collecting 9 points in the elimination round, while Matansa defeated Kanoa in the tiebreak for the second finals berth. Matansa and Kanoa each gained 7 markers in the elimination, while TanHoldings and Fiesta FC completed the field.

The champions in each division received trophies during the brief award ceremonies.

"We would like to thank all the players and officials for taking part in the AFC Women's Football Day. We would also like to acknowledge our president, Jerry Tan, other NMIFA officials and staff for making sure that we continue to have this program to promote women's football in our islands," NMIFA Executive Committee member Patricia Coleman said.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Participants in the AFC Women's Football Day pose for a group photo.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Wanna Be Soccer Players' Mia Carreon, right, tries to deflect the ball hit by Wuteva's Jerlyn Castillo.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Kanoa Football Club's Melanie Santos, center, faces two TanHoldings defenders.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Fiesta Football Club (white jersey) and Matansa Football Club players chase the ball during the 3x3 game in the AFC Women's Football Day held last Saturday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Paire players and their coach, Patricia Coleman, right, pose with their U9 championship trophy.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Still Playing members are all smiles after receiving the championship trophy in the masters division.

Verlander, Sale agree to contract extensions

PAGE 24

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Mavericks roll past Curry-less Warriors

PAGE 25

Carol gets first title for 2019

Blue Jays set finals date with Falcons

ROBY N. PAMINTUAN

The Blue Jays first baseman is set to catch the ball ahead of a Braves runner during their semis game in the Natibu Sports Association Girls Fast-pitch and Boys Slow-pitch Softball League last Saturday at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

By ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
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CORRESPONDENT

The Blue Jays outgunned the Braves in five innings, 18-8, to claim the second and last finals berth in the Natibu Sports Association Girls Fast-pitch and Boys Slow-pitch Softball League last Saturday at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

The Blue Jays will play the top-ranked Falcons in the finals this Saturday at 2pm.

With the Blue Jays barely ahead of the Braves at the end of the third inning of their semis match, 6-4, the former strung together eight runs and shut out the latter in the pivotal fourth inning to gain full control of the game. The Blue Jays' momentum carried over into the top of the fifth inning, as they added four more runs.

Jun Celis led the Blue Jays in the fourth inning as he delivered a crucial round-tripper that sent Henry Fleming and J.P. Celis home. Before Jun Celis' homer, Fleming and J.P. Celis each hit singles, which set the table for the Blue Jays to gorge themselves on runs after Jun Celis' timely hit. Trevon Lieto also hit the ball out of the park in the fourth, while Adam Salalila, Cody Foreman, James Salalila, and Jordan Babauta rounded out the Blue Jays' eight-run scoring output.

Then in the fifth and final inning, Jordan Babauta and J.P. Celis launched one homer apiece. Babauta brought with him James Salalila, while the J.P. Celis gave Fleming passage home. Babauta and J.P. Celis' hits were enough to push the Braves closer to the exit door.

Down by 14, 4-18, going into the last inning, the Braves were pressured to score at least five runs to extend the game. However, they fell short

See BLUE on Page 26

ITF World Tennis Tour

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI's Carol Lee rallied past her highly favored finals foe to clinch the singles championship in the ITF/CAT North African Circuit yesterday in Casablanca, Morocco.

Lee defeated No.1 seed Aubane Droguet of France, 7-6 (3), 2-6, 7-6 (6) to win her first Juniors ITF title of the year.

"I was losing in the tiebreak, 2-6, but I was able to catch up with her," Lee said. "I would like to thank Head for the sponsorship and of course the International Tennis Federation, my coaches at the ITF center in Fiji, and my family for always supporting me."

The ITF/CAT North African Circuit was Lee's penultimate tournament while training at the ITF/Confederation of African Tennis Regional Training Centre and besides beating Droguet, she also topped two other players from France to rule the Grade 3 competition.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The CNMI's Carol Lee is all smiles after receiving a plaque for winning the singles event in the ITF/CAT North African Circuit yesterday in Casablanca, Morocco.

In the opening round, Lee swept French Flavie Brugnone, 6-1, 7-5, while in the semifinals, the CNMI bet also took only two sets to eliminate the latter's compatriot Celia Belle Mohr, 6-2, 7-6. Earlier in the Round of 16, Lee downed Austria's Emily Meyer, 6-3, 6-1, to march into the quarterfinals where the 17-year-old won over Hungary's Luca Janosi, 6-2, 6-0.

After four wins via straight sets, Lee found her match in Droguet, who was heavily picked to prevail in the finale. The French came into the Morocco tournament holding a pair of doubles titles and one in singles that she all earned early this year, as she triumphed in Juniors ITF events in the Czech Republic, Tunisia, and Lithuania. Lee, on the other hand, struggled at the start of the season, losing in the first round of two tournaments in Australia (including the Australian Open Juniors) and also faltering in the earlier

See CAROL on Page 26

SIS bags easy win against GCA

By ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
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CORRESPONDENT

Saipan International School had their way against Grace Christian Academy after cruising to a 51-34 victory in the 2018-2019 Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association Varsity Basketball League last Friday at the Geckos court in As Lito.

The Geckos led the Eagles right from the get-go as co-captains Kuu Nishimura and A.J. Hudkins teamed up in handing their squad a13-4 advantage after the first period. Hudkins showcased his versatility in the opening quarter, as he swished a trey to draw first blood and then hit two more shots in the paint for

See SIS on Page 26

ROBY N. PAMINTUAN

Saipan International School's Kuu Nishimura drives against a phalanx of Grace Christian Academy defenders during their game in the CCOPSA caging last Friday at the Geckos court in As Lito.